EMOTIONS IN *NJÁLS SAGA* AND *EGILS SAGA*: APPROACHES AND LITERARY ANALYSIS

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DECLARATION

This thesis is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration, except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. It is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted, or is being concurrently submitted, for a degree or diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. I further state that no substantial part of my thesis has already been submitted, or is being concurrently submitted, for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution, except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. In accordance with the English Faculty guidelines, it does not exceed 80,000 words, including footnotes and references but excluding translations and the bibliography.

ABSTRACT

The fundamental question of this dissertation is how we as modern readers can understand the feelings depicted in literature written on the periphery of Europe over seven hundred years ago — that is, what might be hidden in the text that we, due to our unfamiliarity with the distant culture, might not fully grasp. My study analyses the emotional expression in *Egils saga* and *Njáls saga*, two particularly rich and complex thirteenth-century Old Norse *Íslendingasǫgur* (Sagas of Icelanders). The genre is notorious for the apparent emotional reticence of its narrative style. This dissertation challenges that notion from the fundamental premise that, to understand the literary representations of emotions in medieval literature, we must equip ourselves with a model of the knowledge systems of the culture that created it. To reach this goal, the study applies interdisciplinary methods of literary criticism, intellectual history, cognitive linguistics, anthropology, and manuscript studies, and is thus situated at the cross-section of these disciplines. To access the emotional depiction in the two sagas, I argue for the necessity of an approach from three angles: through the analysis of emotive words, bodily metaphors, and the performance and practice of emotions manifested in the sagas.

I. Words. The emotion words in the sagas have hitherto not been comprehensively explored. In this section, I explain my construction of a digital database of the words used to express emotions in the two sagas. The database enabled the plotting of various variables, such as character, gender, social status, and speaker, against one another. This uncovered narrative patterns and formulas for action, as well as allowing the identification of anomalies and the production of the first lexicons of the two sagas' emotional vocabulary. The results demonstrate that, contrary to what has often been assumed, the sagas contain a wide variety of emotion words that are applied systematically, precisely, and purposefully to achieve specific narrative aims. The conclusions provide a vital foundation for the analysis in subsequent sections.

II. Body. The second and largest section is concerned with bodily metaphors and the interplay between Old Norse knowledge systems about the body and emotions and the learned European ones. As no study to date has mapped material evidence for learned Latin writings on the body and emotions in the Old Norse world, I identify and list manuscripts, fragments, and intertextual evidence for Old Norse thirteenth-century knowledge of Latin learned ideas on the topic. I apply this information in an analysis of the bodily expressions of emotions in the two sagas. Moreover, I analyse bodily depictions in skaldic poetry and investigate the use of the 'hydraulic metaphor' of emotions. The results demonstrate that, within these Old Norse works, emotions are physically conceived of as residing entirely in the breast, and not partially in the head, as is assumed in the learned Latin texts. However, Latin knowledge influenced emotional depictions in various other ways and can be viewed as a challenge posed to vernacular ideas, resulting in a dialectic manifestation of these knowledge systems that can be shown to surface in each of the saga texts.

III. Emotional practice. Closely connected to bodily representations is the notion of how emotions are practised and performed through action. The third section investigates this by applying theories of performativity and emotional practice in the analysis of the two saga texts and by probing their relationship with the Old Norse system of honour and gender structures and the prominent emotive scripts in the two sagas. The results reveal the emphasis placed on strict emotional restraint and how behavioural codes differ according to the gender and social status of the characters.

To Þorgeir Nói.

‘Hiarta mannz kenner allz.’

(*Second Grammatical Treatise*, thirteenth century)

PREFACE

This thesis conforms to the current *MHRA Style Book*. In accordance with the recommendations of this style guide, Oxford English rules of spelling are applied. All translations are my own except where otherwise noted. Translations appear in footnotes with the exception of skaldic poetry, of which translations appear in the main text, in addition to occasional other instances for the sake of clarity. According to the Icelandic patronymic name convention, Icelandic names are listed in the bibliography and alphabetized by the authors' first names.

Three chapters in this work have been published during the course of my PhD studies or have been approved for publishing. An expanded version of Section 2.2.2 is published as 'Humoral Theory in the Medieval North: An Old Norse Translation of *Epistula Vindiciani* in Hauksbók', *Gripla,* 29 (2018), 35–66. A version of Chapter 5 is published as 'The Head, the Heart and the Breast: Bodily Conceptions of Emotion and Cognition in Old Norse Skaldic Poetry', *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 15 (2019), 29–64. Parts of Chapter 3 are used in the forthcoming 'Emotions of a Vulnerable Viking: Negotiations of Masculinity in *Egils saga*', in *Masculinities in Old Norse Literature,* ed. by Gareth Lloyd Evans and Jessica Hancock (Cambridge: Brewer, 2020), pp. 147–63.

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INTRODUCTION: SAGA FEELINGS

Saga heroes can aptly be described as tight-lipped when speaking about their emotions, and the narrative voice is not much more helpful when it comes to articulating feelings. *Íslendingasǫgur* are notorious for the apparent emotional reticence of their narrative style, and their nonchalance and understatements. Paradoxically, the sagas simultaneously centre on profoundly dramatic events, tragic fates, and the intense and often passionate struggles of their characters. The topic of this dissertation is the artistically intricate narrative means through which emotions are conveyed in two of the sagas. My analysis seeks to challenge the assumption that the sagas are unemotional, and to demonstrate that a productive approach to unravelling the narrative modes through which feelings are communicated in them is in relation to the culture that produced them: its vocabulary, manuscript production, literary aesthetics, conceptions of the mind and body, systems of knowledge and belief, and its values and ethics. Thus, in addition to producing an analysis of the sagas' literary depiction of feelings, I seek to address and offer solutions to some of the methodological problems that arise when endeavouring to access saga feelings.

When attempting to better comprehend the emotional expression in the sagas, one immediately faces the problem, as William Ian Miller points out, of 'getting at emotions across time, language, and geographic, moral, and cultural space'.[1] The sagas were written by a distant culture removed from the modern reader by at least seven

[1] Miller, 'Emotions and the Sagas', p. 108.

centuries. As most scholars agree, culture shapes and conditions which feelings are expressed, in what manner, and how they are valued, while there is also a common human biology behind the physical mechanisms of emotions.[2] To what extent neurology on one hand, or socialization on the other, are thought to influence this, substantially depends on the individual researcher's field and approach, and so does the definition of the concept of 'emotion'.[3]

For the present purpose, it is necessary to emphasize that emotions in literary texts are discursive events but not actual feelings. As Jutta Eming observes in her insightful essay on the methodological problems that face the researcher of literary emotions of the past, the aim is not to understand the emotions of historical individuals but to understand the aesthetics behind the literary representations of feelings within the imagined space of the saga world: how fictive people display their emotions, why they are made to feel and express those feelings in the way they do, and what significance this has in the narrative.[4]

This encompasses questions about the relation between emotion and language in the works, the relation between emotion and the body, and the social dynamics associated with particular feelings within the fictive text. For this reason, an anthropological framework for emotions suits the aims of this study well, which consists primarily of conceptualizing feelings as a part of a 'cultural meaning system'[5] and, in the words of Clifford Geertz, viewing them in themselves as 'cultural artefacts'.[6] This conceptualization is worded thus by Robert C. Solomon:

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[2] The opposite views of biological approaches to emotions and social constructionism are aptly summarized by Rosenwein in 'Problems and Methods'. See also Larrington's essay, 'The Psychology of Emotion and Study of the Medieval Period'. The divergences between materialist and idealist views on emotion reflect the long history of a mind-body dichotomy. In the paradigm-shifting work, *Descartes' Error*, the neuroscientist Antonio Damasio argued for a simultaneous neurological and cultural basis of emotions. For a discussion of historical, social, cultural, and biological themes in emotion research, see *The Emotions: Social, Cultural and Biological Dimensions*, ed. by Harré and Parrott.

[3] See, e.g., the debate on defining emotion in a special section of the journal *Emotion Review*, 2 (2010).

[4] Eming, 'Emotionen als Gegenstand', pp. 257–60.

[5] Lutz and White, 'Anthropology of Emotions', p. 288.

[6] Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, p. 81.

> An emotion is a system of concepts, beliefs, attitudes, and desires, virtually all of which are context-bound, historically developed, and culture-specific (which is not to foreclose the probability that some emotions may be specific to all cultures).[7]

As literature is also a cultural product, it reflects the values and knowledge systems that produced it. By association, the representation of emotions in literature can be informed by the knowledge of the culture that produced the literature. Therefore, the culture that created the sagas, including its literary aesthetics, vocabulary, metaphors, the epistemology of the body and emotions, and ethics and values concerning feelings and their expression, serves as a key. For this reason, the present task necessitates not only the primary tool of close literary analysis and criticism but also the methods of philology, codicology, and intellectual history, along with cognitive linguistics theory and the application of anthropological approaches to the culture that produced these works.

As case studies, I have chosen two particularly rich and complex thirteenth-century sagas, *Egils saga Skalla-Grímssonar* and *Brennu-Njáls saga*. They are especially suitable due to not only their length and complexity but also their time of composition, which has been ascertained with considerable confidence to be the first and second halves of the thirteenth century, respectively. While a consensus exists that *Íslendingasǫgur* were mainly written in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries,[8] the dating of individual sagas can be fraught with difficulties.[9] However, in the case of *Egils saga*, the *terminus ante quem* of its writing is determined by the oldest extant fragment of any saga, the so-called theta-fragment (AM 162 A θ fol.), dated to the mid-thirteenth century.[10] Furthermore, *Egils saga* is the only saga that has, with plausible arguments,

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[7] Solomon, 'Getting Angry', p. 249. This approach aligns with Barbara H. Rosenwein's concept of 'emotional community', which refers to groups within society that have display rules for emotions that are distinct from those of other groups; they 'have their own particular values, modes of feeling, and ways to express those feelings'. *Generations of Feeling*, p. 3. William M. Reddy applied the related notion of 'emotional regimes'; but by that concept, William refers to the dominant mode of emotional expression within a community. *Navigation of Feeling*, pp. 55, 126–27.

[8] A consensus exists on the broad period of the time of writing of the genre; see, e.g., Jónas Kristjánsson, *Eddas and Sagas*, p. 217; Vésteinn Ólason, 'Family Sagas', pp. 114–15. It has been suggested that the latest few sagas may date to the early fifteenth century; see ibid., pp. 102, 114–15.

[9] For a discussion of old and new scholarship on saga dating and the problems of dating, see Glauser, 'What is Dated'; Mundal, 'Dating of the Oldest Sagas'.

[10] An edition of the fragment is published in *AM 162 A θ fol (Reykjavík)*, ed. by Speed Kjeldsen and is accompanied by an analysis and arguments for its dating.

been attributed to a named author. The hypothesis of a narrower frame around the date of composition than the first half of the thirteenth century is based on the assumption that it was written by Snorri Sturluson (d. 1241),[11] most probably between 1220 and 1241.[12]

The extant manuscripts of *Njáls saga* also provide a good indication of the time of its writing. The earliest manuscripts date from around 1300, and all of them are considered copies of even older manuscripts.[13] Further arguments point to the latter half of the thirteenth century, including intertextual evidence and the treatment of law in the saga.[14] This has led to a broad consensus for its composition having taken place in the period between 1275 and 1290.

The relatively confident dating of both sagas is of particular significance, as it enables placing them in context with other textual material available or produced in the thirteenth century and with the prevailing intellectual currents of thought at the time of composition. Furthermore, both works include skaldic poetry, which adds an important layer in the interpretation of their depiction of feelings. Additionally, while they are both highly intricate and sophisticated works of art, they are simultaneously quite different from each other in style and content. *Egils saga* largely centres on one character while *Njáls saga* has many protagonists. Both of them offer a thirteenth-century view of a tenth-century past, but in fundamentally different ways. *Egils saga* largely tells the life story of an unruly tenth-century warrior and poet, who struggles with Norwegian royalty and dies in old age after having loved and grieved. *Njáls saga* is a multi-character tragedy on a large scale, about the futility of family feuds and how (not) to resolve conflicts.

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[11] This was first argued by Björn M. Olsen in 1904 in his 'Landnáma and Egils saga', pp. 202–30, and later by Sigurður Nordal in his 'Formáli', p. xciii. Peter Hallberg's subsequent research on the stylistic resemblance between *Heimskringla*, which is attributed to Snorri, and *Egils saga* has supported this view considerably. See Hallberg, 'Stilsignalement och författarskap'. This has been further supported through digital stylistic analysis by Haukur Þorgeirsson, 'How similar are Heimskringla and Egils saga?'. Margaret Cormack made a counterargument to this in her '*Egils saga*, *Heimskringla*, and the Daughter of Eiríkr blóðøx'.

[12] Sigurður Nordal, 'Formáli', p. xciii; Jónas Kristjánsson, 'Var Snorri Sturluson upphafsmaður', pp. 103–05; Vésteinn Ólason, 'Íslendingasögur og þættir', p. 40.

[13] A full list of the manuscripts of *Njáls saga* is provided by Arthur and Zeevaert in their 'Manuscripts of *Njáls saga*'. This essay forms a part of the essential collection of essays in *New Studies in the Manuscript Tradition of Njáls saga*, ed. by Lethbridge and Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir, which is the most recent work on the manuscripts of the saga. Further discussion on the manuscripts can be found below.

[14] Einar Ól. Sveinsson, 'Formáli', pp. lxxv–lxxxiv.

Therefore, the two sagas offer different elements for analysis, and they feature in various parts of this dissertation to differing extents.

Compared to other fields of emotion research, the study of Old Norse emotions can be viewed as still being at a relatively early stage. Within the field of European medieval history, literature, and philosophy, several ground-breaking studies have been published on emotions, as a part of what is referred to as an 'emotional turn' in the humanities in recent decades.[15] The vast literature within sociology, anthropology, linguistics, and psychology further reflects the interdisciplinary and versatile nature of the topic.[16] As for Old Norse, apart from Thomas Bredsdorff's study on the importance of erotic threads in *Egils saga* in 1971,[17] it was not until the 1990s that the current study of saga emotions began to take form, with suggestions on how to approach the emotions of these notoriously, and perhaps unjustifiably, 'coldly unemotional' sagas.[18] This description is by a pioneer in this regard, the historian William Ian Miller, who published an essay in 1992 on saga emotions in an anthology with an anthropological focus. In his essay, Miller suggested approaching emotions in the sagas through the analysis of emotion words, somatic responses, behaviour and action, and through the system of beliefs depicted in the narratives.[19] The same volume included a short essay by Jacques Le Goff on the significance of laughter in *Njáls saga*.[20] Miller's subsequent monograph, *Humiliation: And Other Essays on Honor, Social Discomfort, and Violence*,

[15] On the historical front, seminal studies include Rosenwein, *Generations of Feeling*; *Anger's Past*, ed. by Rosenwein; Boquet and Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*; and Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*. A ground-breaking study on the medieval philosophy of emotions is provided by Knuuttila in his *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*. As for medieval literature, important contributions have been made in recent essay collections, such as *Emotions in Medieval Arthurian Literature*, ed. by Brandsma, Larrington, and Saunders; and *Anglo-Saxon Emotions*, ed. by Jorgensen, McCormack, and Wilcox.

[16] The breadth of the field of emotion studies is well reflected in the numerous essays in *Handbook of Emotions*, ed. by Lewis, Haviland-Jones, and Barrett.

[17] Bredsdorff, *Kaos og kærlighed*. An English translation was published in 2001 as *Chaos and Love*.

[18] Miller, 'Emotions and the Sagas', p. 90.

[19] Ibid., p. 93.

[20] Le Goff, 'Laughter in *Brennu-Njáls saga*'.

includes a substantial section on how the emotions of humiliation and shame govern social settings and motivations in the saga world.[21]

In his monumental 2007 study on the expressions of love in the corpus of Old Norse literature, Daniel Sävborg thoroughly illustrates how indirect expressions are the main mode of depicting love in the sagas, functioning as signifiers to the audience of the emotive content of the scenes in question.[22] Furthermore, many types of bodily expressions of love can be considered formulaic, Sävborg demonstrates.[23] Indeed, gestures and somatic markers of emotions have been the focus of a handful of essays on the sagas by Kirsten Wolf and others.[24]

The preference in Old Norse texts for indirect emotional expression is further supported in studies sparked by the interest in Old Norse translated romances and how they compare to the French and Anglo-Norman source texts. By comparing Old Norse translations of French romances with their original versions, Sif Rikhardsdottir illustrates how direct references to emotions are reduced in the Old Norse adaptations, compared to their surviving French versions, arguing for a preference among the Old Norse audience for a less expressive emotive style.[25] Carolyne Larrington examines Old Norse translated *lais* and romances, probing their language of feelings and how it is adapted for an Old Norse audience.[26] Along with selected sagas and eddic poetry, Old Norse romances are also the subject of Sif Rikhardsdottir's most recent study*, Emotions in Old*

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[21] Two other socio-historical studies on Old Norse emotions should be mentioned here: Gunnar Karlsson's *Ástarsaga Íslendinga að fornu* on love in medieval Iceland and Auður G. Magnúsdóttir's essay 'Ill er ofbráð reiði' on the historical and social role of anger as it appears in *Njáls saga*.

[22] Sävborg, *Sagan om kärleken*.

[23] Ibid. Furthermore, Anne Heinrichs has written on the formulaic use of appositions to denote emotions in the sagas; see her 'The Apposition'. See also Sävborg's work on grief and sorrow in eddic poetry: *Sorg och elegi i Eddans hjältediktning*.

[24] Low Soon Ai analysed Skarpheðinn's grin in her 'Mirthless Content of Skarphedinn's Grin'. Kirsten Wolf has produced three essays that categorise laughter, gestures, and facial expressions in a taxonomic manner in Old Norse literature. See her 'Laughter in Old Norse-Icelandic Literature', 'Body Language in Medieval Iceland', 'Somatic Semiotics'. Porter and Antón focus on blushing, swelling, and other somatic markers in their essay 'Flushing in Anger'.

[25] Sif's book-length study, *Medieval Translations and Cultural Discourse*, deals most thoroughly with the subject. See also her 'Translating Emotion', p. 164.

[26] Larrington, 'The Translated *Lais*'; 'Learning to Feel in the Old Norse Camelot?' See also her essay on how the field of psychology can inform the reading of emotions in medieval narratives, with examples from Old Norse literature: 'Psychology of Emotion and the Study of the Medieval Period.'

Norse Literature: Translations, Voices, Contexts, where she probes how emotions are conveyed in her case studies.

In this dissertation, I draw on the important foundation laid in all the above-mentioned studies as well as others that I will refer to in the relevant sections. Adding to this growing body of work, I offer a three-fold approach to the analysis of saga feelings, along with methodological tools for probing their emotional expression. As Barbara H. Rosenwein points out, emotions come not as 'singletons'[27] but form a chain of emotive events, sometimes entailing multiple feelings. Something gives rise to an emotion, which leads to a (voluntary or involuntary) display or absence of a reaction (which can also be of significance). An expression can be bodily (physiological), verbal, or consist of an action or gesture, but all three are often involved in the same emotional episode. In the same way, emotions in *Íslendingasǫgur* are mediated through signifiers that can be conceptualized as appearing in three modes: as expressions through language by the characters or the narrator, as bodily signifiers and metaphors, and as actions or performance. Pulling one thread out of this context does not provide a sufficiently meaningful result for the aim of this dissertation. Focusing on interlaced signifiers for emotions and their functions in literary texts, informed by the cultural factors and variables that lie behind them, my analysis calls for an approach from three angles.

The emotion words in the sagas have not hitherto been comprehensively explored. In the first section, I explain my construction of a digital database of the words used to express emotion in the two sagas. The database enabled the plotting of various variables — such as character, gender, social status, and the speaker — against one another. This uncovered narrative patterns, formulas for action, and the identification of anomalies as well as the first lexicons of the two sagas' emotional vocabulary. The conclusions provide a vital foundation for the analysis in subsequent sections.

The second and largest section is concerned with bodily metaphors and the interplay between Old Norse knowledge systems about the body and emotions and learned Latin ones. As no study to date has mapped material evidence for learned writings on the body and emotions in the Old Norse world, I identify and list manuscripts, fragments, and intertextual evidence for Old Norse thirteenth-century knowledge of learned Latin ideas on the topic. I apply this information in an analysis of

[27] Rosenwein, *Generations of Feelings*, p. 8.

the corporeal expressions of emotions in the two sagas. I analyse bodily depictions in skaldic poetry and investigate the use of the 'hydraulic metaphor' of emotions.

The notion of how emotions are conveyed through action is closely connected to bodily representations. The third section investigates the communicative and social function of emotional display within the narratives, applying theories of performativity and emotional practice in the analysis and probing their relationship to the Old Norse system of honour, gender structures, and the prominent emotive scripts in the case studies.

Egils saga is preserved in roughly seventy manuscripts and fragments.[28] None of them preserves the complete text. The text in the mid-fourteenth century Möðruvallabók (AM 132 fol., abbreviated M), along with fragments of the saga related to this manuscript, is the best and fullest witness and forms the basis for most editions, including the Íslenzk fornrit edition.[29] The differences between the editions of the saga primarily concern how the lacunae in M are filled. The two other main manuscripts are Ketilsbækur (AM 453 4to and 462 4to, abbreviated K), which are seventeenth-century copies of a now-lost vellum manuscript, and Wolfenbüttelbók (WolfAug 9 10 4to, abbreviated W) dated to the mid-fourteenth century.[30]

Njáls saga survives in around sixty manuscripts. Twenty-one of these are medieval parchment manuscripts and fragments.[31] None provides a complete text, but only two leaves are missing in Reykjabók (AM 468 4to, abbreviated R), dated to 1300–1325. This manuscript thus forms the basis of most editions. Eiríkur Jónsson and Konráð Gíslason's edition from 1875 is based on R, and variant readings are provided in its apparatus from other parchment manuscripts and some post-medieval paper

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[28] For a full discussion of the manuscripts of *Egils saga*, see Sigurður Nordal, 'Formáli', pp. xcv–xcviii; Jón Helgason, 'Athuganir um nokkur handrit Egils sögu'.

[29] An edition of M is published in *Egils saga, A-redaktionen*, ed. by Bjarni Einarsson, with parallel text from fragments.

[30] Editions are published, respectively, in *Egils saga, C-redaktionen*, ed. by Chesnutt, and *Egils saga in Wolfenbüttelbók*, ed. by Schwabe.

[31] A thorough survey of the manuscripts was conducted by Jón Þorkelsson, 'Om håndskrifterne af *Njála*'. See also Einar Ól. Sveinsson, *Studies in the Manuscript Tradition of Njálssaga*. A recent survey of six fourteenth-century manuscripts has been provided by Haraldur Bernharðsson, 'Copying *Njáls saga*'. This essay forms a part of an excellent collection of studies on the variance of *Njáls saga* recently published: *New Studies in the Manuscript Tradition of Njáls saga,* ed. by Lethbridge and Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir. A full list of the manuscripts of *Njáls saga* is provided in this work by Arthur and Zeevaert, 'Manuscripts of *Njáls saga*'.

manuscripts. This edition is the fullest critical edition available. However, the Íslenzk fornrit edition of *Njáls saga*, edited by Einar Ól. Sveinsson, is based on M. The beginning of the saga is missing in the manuscript and it has several lacunae. Einar filled the lacunae with readings predominantly from R.[32] However, it is not noted in this edition which manuscript provided the text in each case. Although I use the Íslenzk fornrit editions of both sagas as the base text for my analysis (see, however, Section 1.2), I continuously consult other available editions and note the textual variances between manuscripts when it becomes relevant to the analysis.

[32] A detailed discussion on the editions of *Njáls saga* is provided by Emily Lethbridge and Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir in 'Whose *Njála*?'.

1 EMOTION WORDS

1.1 Introduction

Íslendingasǫgur, as a genre, are characterized by an external perspective. The third-person narrative voice is, as a general rule, externally focalized and presented as objective.[1] The objective voice, however, consists of assumed objectivity and is deceptive as such. The narrator certainly takes a neutral position in the narrative and avoids evaluative comments and value judgements, but at the same time he conceals events, withholds information and maintains a certain point of view over another.[2] The external focalization further means that the narrative voice does not generally analyse the characters' emotional processes with emotion words.[3]

For example, the feelings of the king's mother, Gunnhildr, and the erotic love she holds for Hrútr at the beginning of *Njáls saga*, are never explicitly stated with emotion words. Instead, her passionate emotions are conveyed by her action and gestures, by the

[1] The chapter on *Íslendingasǫgur* in Þorleifur Hauksson's and Þórir Óskarsson's *Íslensk stílfræði* remains one of the most comprehensive analyses of saga style. For a thorough discussion, also see Sävborg, 'Style'. On point of view and focalisation, see Vésteinn Ólason, *Dialogues*, pp. 106–10.
[2] See Sävborg, 'Style', pp. 112–15 on the problems with the term 'objectivity' and on external focalization. On how the author of *Njáls saga* manipulates the reader's sympathies through various rhetorical techniques, see Lönnroth, *Njáls Saga: A Critical Introduction*, pp. 82–101.
[3] See Sävborg, 'Style', p. 123; Sif Rikhardsdottir, *Emotions in Old Norse Literature*, p. 57; Miller, 'Emotions and the Sagas', pp. 94–97. However, in the poetry of the sagas, the focalization is often more internal. This is discussed further in Section 1.3.4. On this point, see Sif Rikhardsdottir, *Emotions in Old Norse Literature*, pp. 85–97; Sävborg, *Sagan om kärleken*, pp. 275–76; Vésteinn Ólason, *Dialogues*, pp. 128–29.

many gifts she gives Hrútr, and her locking herself in her chambers with him for two weeks after announcing to him: 'Þú skalt liggja í lopti hjá mér í nótt, ok vit tvau saman.'[4] Furthermore, her feelings are indicated by her gestures as she kisses Hrútur while casting a spell on him when he leaves her: 'legg ek þat á við þig, at þú megir engri munúð fram koma við konu þá, er þú ætlar þér á Íslandi.'[5]

The same applies to teenage Egill's wrath in *Egils saga* when his brother announces to Egill's disappointment that there is no chance that he will take him abroad with him.[6] Egill's rage at this is not communicated with emotion words, but it is tangible and vividly expressed with his subsequent sabotage of his brother's ship, and his threats of 'gera Þórólfi meiri skaða ok spellvirki, ef hann vildi eigi flytja hann í brott.'[7] In the background, a storm rages in the black night, functioning as a reflection of Egill's inner state: 'Um nóttina eptir gerði á œðiveðr […] er myrkt var ok flóð var sjóvar, þá kom Egill þar ok […] hjó hann í sundr festar [skipsins].'[8] Indeed, as Sif Rikhardsdottir argues, in the sagas, 'emotive intensity is not necessarily to be found in the frequency of, or the variety of, emotions words.'[9] Rather, emotional expression in the prose of *Íslendingasǫgur* is mainly implicit; feelings are communicated through behaviour, physical reactions, and indirect allusions, and most often need to be inferred.

Nevertheless, emotion words are indeed found in *Íslendingasǫgur*. However, the extent of the part they play in the sagas' depiction of feelings — what explicit emotion words are used, how, by whom, and in what context — has not been the focus of studies on emotions in saga literature. While a variety of studies on emotion terms have been conducted within classical studies and surveys of texts of the medieval West, a comprehensive study of Old Norse emotion vocabulary, and how it is used, has yet to be

[4] *Brennu-Njáls saga*, ed. by Einar Ól. Sveinsson, hereafter abbreviated *Nj*, p. 15. 'You shall lie in my chambers tonight, and us two together.'
[5] *Nj*, p. 21. 'I cast the spell that you will not be able to have any sensual pleasure with the woman you plan to marry in Iceland.'
[6] *Egils saga Skalla-Grímssonar*, ed. by Sigurður Nordal; hereafter abbreviated *Eg*, p. 102.
[7] *Eg*, pp. 102–03. 'Doing more harm and sabotage towards Þórólfr if he didn't take him away with him.'
[8] *Eg*, pp. 102–03. 'The following night a wild storm raged […] when it had become dark and the tide was high, Egill came there and […] chopped asunder the moorings of the ship.'
[9] Sif Rikhardsdottir, *Emotions in Old Norse Literature*, pp. 71–78, quote on p. 71.

made.[10] In the absence of such a lexical investigation, the question arises as to what extent assertions, such as that of Kirsten Wolf, that *Íslendingasǫgur* are 'poor in emotional vocabulary' can be taken as truisms[11] — or Miller's claim that readers of the sagas are 'seldom assisted by native emotions words'.[12] Without a point of comparison it cannot be ascertained with clarity what 'poor' or 'seldom' signify in this context. This drives a closer inquiry regarding the extent to which feelings are expressed with emotion words in the sagas and what function these words have within them.

This subject has been approached to some extent in three former studies. First, in his 1994 essay, 'Emosjon og aksjon i *Njáls saga*', Vésteinn Ólason explores the theme of honour in *Njáls saga* through nouns that refer to emotions.[13] Vésteinn finds only fourteen nouns in the saga that describe emotions.[14] These nouns, he finds, are used 117 times in the saga, and the majority are words for friendship: *vinr* (friend), *vinátta* (friendship), and *vinfengi* (friendship).[15] Vésteinn concludes that '[f]ølelser sjelden blir nevnt med ord, og at ordforrådet ikke er særlig nyansert […] *Njáls saga* bruker et enkelt ordforråd for å beskrive emosjoner'.[16] Vésteinn does not say why he limits his investigation to nouns, nor explain the criteria behind the selection of words, for example, why he considers a word such as *óvinr* (enemy) to be an emotion word, but does not include the nouns *hræðsla* (fear), *hugleysi* (cowardice), *áhyggja* (anxiety or worry), *æði* (rage), *óþokki* (hostility), *blíða* (affection), and many others found in the saga, as seen in Table 3 below.

Second, Sif Rikhardsdottir's most recent study includes a discussion on the function of a handful of emotion words in *Egils saga*: *reiðr* (angry), *ókátr* (unhappy), *ógleði* (unhappiness), *kátr* (cheerful), *gladdisk* (became glad), *harmr* (grief), *hryggr* (sad

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[10] On emotion terms in classical writings, see, e.g., Kaster, *Emotion, Restraint, and Community in Ancient Rome*. On the medieval West, see Rosenwein, 'Emotion Words'; 'Thinking Historically about Medieval Emotions', pp. 833–36.

[11] Wolf, 'Somatic Semiotics', p. 143. Wolf does not provide arguments for this assertion.

[12] Miller, 'Emotions and the Sagas', p. 107.

[13] Vésteinn Ólason, 'Emosjon og aksjon', p. 161.

[14] Ibid., p. 162. These are *ást* (love), *fjandskapr* (animosity), *gleði* (joy), *grátraust* (crying voice), *harmr* (sorrow), *harmsǫk* (the cause of sorrow), *kærleikr* (affection), *ótti* (fear), *óvinr* (enemy), *reiði* (anger), *tregi* (sorrow), *vinr* (friend), *vinátta* (friendship), and *vinfengi* (friendship). He further considers the verb *gráta* (cry) and the adjectives *reiðr* (angry) and *harmdauði* (mourned).

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid., p. 164. 'Emotions are rarely mentioned with words and the vocabulary is not very nuanced […] *Njáls saga* uses a simple vocabulary to describe emotions.'

or grieved), *allkátr* (very cheerful), and *ást* (love).[17] Sif concludes that emotion words in *Egils saga* are 'few' and 'display only a small assortment of mental states',[18] and that the 'emotive content' of the words is 'fairly limited'.[19] However, Sif does not supply information on what, if any, other words she may have considered, or their frequency, to arrive at this conclusion.

Third, in her essay, 'Learning to Feel in the Old Norse Camelot?', Carolyne Larrington explores whether translated romances influenced the emotional style of native Old Norse sagas and includes a 'preliminary analysis of emotion lexis' in different genres of Old Norse literature with examples from poetry and prose.[20] As Larrington notes, 'it is evident that Old Norse already possessed a full lexis of emotion […] in the early thirteenth century', which was capable of expressing both basic and complex feelings.[21] Her preliminary analysis 'indicates that a more intensive lexical investigation would be fruitful.'[22]

Larrington's conclusion here serves as a premise for the following analysis. In what follows, the emotional vocabulary of *Egils saga* and *Njáls saga* is listed and analysed to assess the significance and function of emotion words in the two sagas. In the absence of comprehensive studies on the topic, the prerequisite for reaching this goal is to define the design and methods for the construction of such a lexicon. In this section, a method of building lexicons of emotion words extracted from these two sagas is laid out. The lexicons are presented, followed by an analysis and conclusions. The aim is to probe what themes emerge from the lexicons and what they reveal about the use of emotion words within the texts.

It needs to be emphasised at this stage that the use of emotion words comprises only a small part of the conveyance of feelings in the sagas. The expression of feelings must be analysed in a contextual manner, as emotions are communicated through a variety of avenues within these literary works that are outside the narrow semantic scope of emotion words, but also interact with it. In this way, the lexical approach to emotional expression in this chapter provides an important basis for the subsequent analysis in this

[17] Sif Rikhardsdottir, *Emotions in Old Norse Literature*, pp. 64–71.
[18] Ibid., p. 71.
[19] Ibid., p. 64.
[20] Larrington, 'Learning to Feel in the Old Norse Camelot?', p. 86.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid.

thesis on physical expression, metaphors, poetry, action, and emotional practice as well as revealing what aspects of the depiction of feelings are conveyed through emotion words and what that signifies.

1.2 Method

To understand how much emotion words weigh in the depiction of feelings in *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga*, the sagas were scrutinized for words expressing an emotional state.[23] This entailed a close reading of the standard editions of the sagas, word for word, line by line. Emotion words (defined below) were extracted from the text and entered onto digital datasheets. In each case, the names of the characters involved, their gender and societal rank, the speaker, and any consequences were noted. This was done to enable the plotting of each of these variables against any of the others to uncover possible correlations and narrative and linguistic patterns to extract statistical information. Each entry was verified, and the list was refined using electronic versions and the database *Mörkuð íslensk málheild*. The words in the lexicon were then categorized into prominent categories, significant themes, and narrative formulas for further analysis. The process involved disparate obstacles and considerations, which are described in the following sections.

1.2.1 Selection of words

The selection of the words posed several challenges. First, there is the question of what qualifies as a word that refers to an emotion. The chosen method is based on a simple

[23] The editions used to build the lexicon were edited by Jón Torfason and others, published by Svart á hvítu in 1985. This is because the texts of the Svart á hvítu editions form the searchable database *Mörkuð íslensk málheild: Fornrit* and are available in digital form. In the case of *Njáls saga*, this edition is based on the 1875–1889 edition of Konráð Gíslason and Eiríkur Jónsson, where R is the base manuscript, with minor emendations from the Íslenzk fornrit edition. In the case of *Egils saga*, this edition is based on the edition by Finnur Jónsson with minor emendations and supplements from Bjarni Einarsson. These and the Íslenzk fornrit edition of *Egils saga* are all based on M. Each entry in the lexicon was subsequently verified in the Íslenzk fornrit editions of the sagas, and the few deviations that occur are noted in footnotes. The poetry from *Njáls saga* in the Íslenzk fornrit editions that is not printed in the Svart á hvítu editions is, however, included in this study. Other editions and manuscripts were not systematically searched but were consulted for comparison in individual cases, and these instances are noted in the footnotes.

linguistic test developed by Clore, Ortony, and Foss,[24] which has been used in the semantic analysis of emotion words in psychological research.[25] To differentiate between emotional and non-emotional terms, the test distinguishes between two different contexts. One is the context of *feeling* something, and the other is *being* something. Thus, 'angry' is categorized as a genuine emotion term because the subjects of the above study rated both 'feeling angry' and 'being angry' as emotions. However, 'abandoned' is not an emotion term because 'feeling abandoned' is rated as an emotion, whereas 'being abandoned' is not. This test was used as a basic reference point when collecting words from the text. Compound words were added to this that include an emotion word as well as short phrases and idioms that refer to an emotional state.

However, the general concept of 'emotion words' admittedly has a fuzzy boundary, and the process is far from absolute. There are words that hover on the border of any definition of emotions, such as the more than two hundred instances of *góðr* (good) that appear in the sagas. *Góðr* can semantically refer to 'being kind' in addition to 'the good quality' of something. On further analysis, in most cases in the two sagas, *góðr* proved to refer to an act or a quality but not to a feeling of kindness. However, this is unclear in some cases or even intelligible from the text. Given the circumstances, *góðr* is not included in the lexicon.

More, but less frequent, words have an ambiguous meaning, where the context and placement of the word in the text in each case had to be considered to determine whether it denotes an expression of emotion. For example, *angr* is an emotion word denoting sadness in the romance *Parcevals saga,* as Larrington has discussed.[26] She transfers this meaning to the same word in *Njáls saga*.[27] However, in the context in which it appears in *Njáls saga*, *angr* denotes 'material damage', 'trouble', or 'harm' done to someone, rather than sad feelings.[28] Thus, it is not included in this lexicon. Another example is the verb *hressa* and its reflexive form *hressask*, which can mean both 'to cheer up' and 'to recover one's strength'. For this word, the lexicons only count the occurrences that

[24] Clore, Ortony, and Foss, 'The Psychological Foundations of the Affective Lexicon'. See also Oatley, *Best Laid Schemes*, pp. 82–83.
[25] See, e.g., Johnson-Laird and Oatley, 'The Language of Emotions'.
[26] Larrington, 'Learning to Feel in the Old Norse Camelot?', p. 85.
[27] Ibid., p. 87. *Parcevals saga* is an Old Norse translation of Chrétien de Troyes' *Le Conte de Graal*.
[28] See *Nj*, p. 457. See also the footnote on the same page and 'angur' in *Íslensk orðabók*, ed. by Mörður Árnason. The verb *angra* also appears (*Nj*, p. 330) in the meaning 'trouble' (v.).

clearly and evidently refer to the former meaning because that sense refers to emotions, but the other does not.

Second, the fact that the textual material is from a distant culture and written in a foreign language must be considered. As has been demonstrated in numerous ethnographic and linguistic studies, emotion concepts and emotion categories vary across time periods, languages, and cultures. A semantic comparison across languages and cultures can prove highly precarious[29] and invites the risk of an anachronistic bias, resulting in words and terms being overlooked or that meaning is transferred onto them that they do not impart. An emotion word in one language sometimes does not even exist in others. For example, the German word *Schadenfreude* (delight in another person's misfortune) has no equivalent in English. This same view applies when studying past cultures and languages. As Schweder and others emphasize, the goal is to 'render the meaning of other people's mental states without assimilating them in misleading ways to an a priori set of lexical items available in the language of the researcher'.[30]

A case in point is *vinátta* (friendship). In the modern sense, 'friendship' and the Modern Icelandic corresponding term *vinátta* would be viewed as a word expressing feelings of affection. In *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga*, however, *vinátta* and *vinr* (friend) most often refer to political alliances and practical social bonds — not to an internal state of feelings of affection.[31] Thus, it is often discussed in relation to forming an alliance, such as with a king in *Egils saga*: 'Segðu svá konungi, at ek mun vera vinr hans',[32] and in *Njáls saga*, when Gizurr pleads to Gunnarr to form an alliance with Otkell by pleading 'þess beiðu vér, at þú sér vinr Otkels'.[33] Here, Gizurr is far from suggesting that Otkell and Gunnarr become affectionate confidants but is suggesting that they form a practical alliance where Otkell could count on Gunnarr's political support. As Jón Viðar

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[29] See Wierzbicka, *Emotions Across Languages*, pp. 24–31; Goddard and Wierzbicka, *Words and Meanings*, pp. 8–10; see also Lutz's ethnography on the people of Ifaluk, *Unnatural Emotions*; and the research overview on the subject in Russell, 'Culture and the Categorization of Emotions', pp. 429–33.

[30] Shweder and others, 'Cultural Psychology of the Emotions', p. 424.

[31] See examples of *vinátta* (friendship) in *Eg*, pp. 13, 88, 214; and *Nj*, pp. 122, 168, 200; and of *vinr* (friend) in *Eg*, pp. 15, 20; and *Nj*, pp. 12, 132, 286. *Vinátta* is mentioned thirty-six times in *Eg* and twenty-one times in *Nj*. *Vinr* is mentioned twenty-eight times in *Eg* and forty-seven times in *Nj*. Additionally, *Nj* contains the word *vinfengi* (friendship) twice.

[32] *Eg*, p. 13. 'Tell the king that I will be his friend.'

[33] *Nj*, p. 132. 'We ask that you become a friend to Otkell.'

Sigurðsson demonstrates in his analysis of friendship in Iceland *c.* 900–1300: 'friendship ties might best be compared to a contract between two parties with clear reciprocal obligations. Feelings often had little to do with it.'[34] The vast majority of the occurrences of the words *vinr*, *vinátta*, and *vinfengi* in the two sagas clearly refer to such a 'contract', although it admittedly remains ambiguous in odd cases if affection is perhaps additionally being alluded to.[35]

These words are thus not included in the lexicon. However, the word *ástvinátta* (affectionate friendship) is included owing to the prefix *ást-*,[36] which clearly denotes affectionate feelings. Furthermore, it is sometimes noted that *vinátta* (friendship) is *kærr* (dear)[37] and the word *kærr* is included in the lexicon.

'Shame', in particular, is discussed here because honour is a prominent theme in the genre of *Íslendingasǫgu*r.[38] However, the Modern English word 'shame' emerges as a very problematic term to assimilate directly to other cultures.[39] *Skǫmm* is one of the words Larrington classifies as an emotion word,[40] and translates it to English as 'shame'.[41] This particular English word is defined in the *Oxford English Dictionary* as a 'painful emotion arising from the consciousness of something dishonouring, ridiculous, or

[34] Jón Viðar Sigurðsson, *Viking Friendship*, p. 3.
[35] Yet, this does not mean that warm feelings of (male) friendship are not expressed in both works by other means. On friendship and homosocial bonds in *Íslendingasǫgur,* see Chapter 2 of Evans, *Men and Masculinities in the Sagas of Icelanders*.
[36] *Eg,* p. 284. The context is indeed alliance: Ǫnundr uses the word (sincerely or not) in an attempt to persuade Egill to reconcile with him and does that by referring to their long affectionate friendship and growing up together.
[37] See *Eg*, pp. 3, 88; *Nj*, p. 168.
[38] On honour and shame in the sagas and medieval Icelandic society, see the essays in *Sæmdarmenn*, ed. by Helgi Þorláksson; Meulengracht Sørensen, *Fortælling og ære*; Svavar Hrafn Svavarsson, 'Honour and Shame' and Miller, *Humiliation*, pp. 93–130. On emotions and honour, see Chapter 7.
[39] On problems and errors of translating various foreign words into the English 'shame' in ethnographic studies see Shweder and others, 'Cultural Psychology of the Emotions', pp. 418–20; Riesman, *Freedom in Fulani Social Life*, p. 137; Russell, 'Culture and the Categorization of Emotions', pp. 430–31.
[40] Larrington, 'Learning to Feel in the Old Norse Camelot?', pp. 87–88.
[41] As is most common; see *Icelandic-English Dictionary*, ed. by Cleasby and Vigfusson, p. 565; *A Concise Dictionary of Old Icelandic*, ed. by Geir T. Zoëga, p. 479. *Skǫmm* is of Germanic roots, and thus etymologically related to 'shame'. OE: 'scamu', 'sceamu'. See *OED*, 'shame, n.'.

indecorous in one's own conduct or circumstances'.[42] A different, non-emotional definition of 'shame' is also offered: a 'loss of esteem or reputation'.[43] *Skǫmm* has both these meanings in Old Norse and Modern Icelandic, although the latter meaning is more common.[44] *Skǫmm* and related words, as well as the antonym *sœmð* (honour), are certainly frequent in *Njáls saga*, where honour and humiliation are prominent themes. A juxtaposition of the frequency of these words in *Njáls saga* and the three sagas that come closest to it in length highlights *Njáls saga*'s stress on this theme above the other three (Table 1).[45]

Table 1. *Skǫmm* and semantically related words in four sagas[46]

Njáls saga	***Egils saga***	***Laxdœla saga***	***Grettis saga***	
skǫmm (13) *	skǫmm (3)	skǫmm (4)	skǫmm (1)	*(dishonour)*
svívirðing, svívirða, svívirðligr (7)	svívirðing (1)	svívirðing (7)	svívirðing (6)	*(infamy)*
sneypa (2)	-	-	-	*(disgrace)*
ósæmð (0)	ósœmð (1)	ósœmð (1)	-	*(dishonour)*
óvirðing (1)	-	-	óvirðing (7)	*(disrespect)*
sœmð (38)	sœmð (7)	sœmð (5)	sœmð (9)	*(honour)*

* Frequency in parenthesis.

However, it can be argued that *skǫmm,* as it appears in *Njáls saga,* does not refer to an inner state of *feeling shame* or *being ashamed*. Rather, it refers to a social context within the world of the saga. By behaving in a certain way, the characters can suffer a social loss

[42] *OED*, 'shame, n.' Within psychology, it has been defined similarly to 'the response when a person feels that if their true nature was to be known, others would be repulsed', Ekman, 'What is Meant', p. 366; and as 'self-disgust as a result of evaluation of self in relation to own and others' standards', Johnson-Laird and Oatley, 'The Language of Emotions', p. 119.
[43] *OED*, 'shame, n.'
[44] See the 180 examples in *ONP Registre*. For different meanings in Modern Icelandic, see 'skömm' in *Íslensk orðabók,* ed. by Mörður Árnason.
[45] *Njáls saga* is *c*. one hundred thousand words long, and the other three are roughly sixty to sixty-five thousand words each.
[46] Examples from *Laxdœla saga* and *Grettis saga* were collected using the database *Mörkuð íslensk málheild*. All grammatical cases are included. The examples from *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga* were used as a reference point and were collected using the method described at the beginning of this chapter.

of status and reputation or are at the risk of suffering it in the *eyes of others*. The meaning in this context does not include the person feeling shame. This is the case in all thirteen instances of the word in *Njáls saga*.[47]

Two examples will be taken here to illustrate this point. First, Rannveig's famous words to her daughter-in-law, Hallgerðr: 'Illa ferr þér, ok mun þín skǫmm lengi uppi.'[48] This does not mean that Hallgerðr will feel ashamed for a long time. 'Lengi uppi' refers to something being remembered by the public for a long time. Therefore, the sense is that Hallgerðr will be regarded as dishonourable in the eyes of *others* for a long time. She might feel indifferent to that or devastated; the saga is silent about her emotions in this scene. Another representative example is from Gunnarr's final battle, when he picks up his enemies' arrow and shoots it back at them and says: 'er þeim þat skǫmm, ef þeir fá geig af vápnum sínum.'[49] Gunnarr is commenting here on how ignominious it would appear for his opponents to be hurt by their own weapons. Whether his enemies will *feel* any shame or self-loathing is not indicated, only that this would result in other members of society thinking less of them. Furthermore, this sense of the word *skǫmm* seems to apply to all ten cases of *skǫmm*'s synonyms in *Njáls saga*, shown in Table 1 above.[50] The same applies to *Egils saga*.[51] *Skǫmm* is thus not included in this lexicon, nor are words from the same category, such as *svívirðing*, *sneypa*, and *óvirðing*. However, this does not mean that the feeling of *skǫmm* is not expressed in the sagas. Other modes of depicting

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[47] The word appears in *Nj* in the genitive (*skammar*) on pp. 114, 345, and on 417 in the combination *skammarvíg*. Nominative and accusative forms (*skǫmm*) appear on pp. 137, 149, 187, 189, 315, 330, 372 (twice) and 402. This corresponds to the Svart á hvítu edition, which adds one more case of *skǫmm* on p. 269, included here because that edition is the basis of this lexicon. Two much shorter sagas, *Gísla saga Súrssonar* and *Ljósvetninga saga,* have a higher *relative frequency* of the words in Table 1 compared to *Njáls saga* (calculation based on collecting the words in Table 1 from the database *Mörkuð íslensk málheild*, and plotting the results against the word count in electronic editions). This indicates that the theme of *skǫmm* is very important in *Gísla saga* and *Ljósvetninga saga*.

[48] *Nj*, p. 189. 'Your actions are wicked, and your dishonour will be long-lasting.'

[49] *Nj*, p. 187. 'It is a disgrace for them, if they are harmed by their own weapons.' His mother´s reply implies that this will arouse a swift retaliation.

[50] *Nj*: *svívirðing* pp. 28, 226 (twice), 341 (*svívirða*), 372, 432 (*svívirðligr*, adj.); additionally on p. 139 in the Svart á hvítu edition, and the same place in the Íslenzk fornrit edition reads *skǫmm* (p. 36). *Nj*: *Sneypa* pp. 130, 306; *óvirðing* p. 371.

[51] *Eg*: *skǫmm* pp. 109, 117, 285; *svívirðing* p. 83; *ósœmd* p. 284. Miller has argued that this is the general sense of these words in the whole corpus of *Íslendingasǫgur* and that *skǫmm* and its synonyms are 'conceptualized as the negation of honour. Shame is seldom, if ever, described as a feeling […] Shame, rather, is something done to people'. *Humiliation*, p. 119.

skǫmm as a feeling can be found in the texts, such as physiological reactions and various verbal means that denote the feeling of shame without using the word *skǫmm*.[52]

1.2.2 Problems of categorization

To analyse and compare the size of the vocabulary for different emotions, the words need to be categorized. The question arises what emotion categories apply to Old Norse sagas? Modern psychologists, on the basis of recognition of emotions from facial expressions across cultures, have claimed that there is a set of universal basic emotions. Paul Ekman has argued that there are seven: anger, fear, surprise, sadness, disgust, contempt, and happiness.[53] The basic emotional modes are only five according to Johnson-Laird and Oatley, who leave out Ekman's surprise and contempt.[54] Izard's fundamental emotions number ten, among them are interest and guilt, which are not on the other lists.[55]

However, the concept of basic emotions does not serve the purpose of categorization well in a literary work from a distant culture. Irrespective of how universal or basic some emotions might be, an abundance of ethnographic and linguistic evidence demonstrates that emotions are defined and categorized in different ways across languages and cultures.[56] How (basic or not) emotions are described, expressed, termed, and categorized in different communities is culturally relative. Lists of emotions and categories of emotion have been made from ancient times by Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, Aquinas, and others,[57] and they are all different. This illustrates that, for the present

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[52] See, for example, Section 7.2 of this dissertation.
[53] Ekman, 'What is Meant', pp. 365–66; happiness can be divided further into ten enjoyable emotions, according to Ekman, who does not consider love, hate, or envy (among others) as basic. See also Ekman, 'All Emotions Are Basic'. For a critique on Ekman's conclusions and methodology, see, e.g., Russell, 'Is There Universal Recognition of Emotion?'; Fridlund, *Human Facial Expression*, pp. 276–95.
[54] Johnson-Laird and Oatley, 'The Language of Emotions', p. 90.
[55] Izard, *Human Emotions*, pp. 85–92.
[56] See Wierzbicka, 'Human Emotions: Universal or Culture-Specific?', pp. 585–87; Russell and Lemay, 'Emotion Concepts', p. 496; Russell, 'Culture and the Categorization of Emotions', pp. 430–33; Shweder and others, 'Cultural Psychology of the Emotions', p. 424.
[57] A good overview of such lists from the ancient Greek to the late Middle Ages can be found in the work by Rosenwein, 'Emotion Words'; and in the extensive work by Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*.

purpose, it is misleading at best to apply previously set categories from a different culture using a different language to the lexis here.

Different techniques have been applied to avoid this bias. To prevent 'presentist and Anglophone biases in modern emotions studies',[58] Rosenwein uses the method of basing her systematic search for emotion words that are valid for the Early Middle Ages on 'non-anachronistic lists and theories' from the same time period, in her case using such works as Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* and Jerome's Vulgate.[59] Anna Wierzbicka bypasses cultural and linguistic categories using a culture-independent meta-language to communicate the content of an emotion regardless of the language used.[60]

However, the present purpose is narrower in scope than to map an emotional lexis that is valid for a certain community and period (like Rosenwein) or to compare different cultures and languages (where Wierzbicka's method would be most useful). The present concern is the role that the emotion vocabulary plays in building the meaning system, aesthetics, narrative structure, and character construction in these two works of literature. The emotion words assist in analysing the two saga's artistic mediation of emotions, but it is not maintained here that this analysis presents a lexicon that is transferrable to the whole genre. As discussed below, the sets of terms that emerged for these two sagas are rather different, and it can be inferred that they are also different from the other sagas in the genre.

1.2.3 The prototype approach

Considering the above, it would be most useful to assess the emotion words in the sagas in relation to the *prototype approach*, which is a framework used to conceptualize people's knowledge on emotions in psychological research.[61] The approach entails the conceptualization of people's knowledge of emotions as organized around prototypes in

[58] Rosenwein, 'Emotion Words', p. 106.
[59] Ibid., p. 105.
[60] Wierzbicka explains the method in 'Human Emotions: Universal or Culture-Specific?' and in Goddard and Wierzbicka, *Words and Meanings*, pp. 11–18.
[61] Pioneering work on the prototype approach is by Rosch in her 'Principles of Categorization'. On the application of the probabilistic/prototype approach, see Niedenthal, 'Emotion Concepts', pp. 592–93; Russell and Lemay, 'Emotion Concepts', pp. 494–95; Russell, 'Natural Language Concepts of Emotion', pp. 120–24. For an example of an application within psychology, see Shaver and others, 'Emotion Knowledge'.

a graded structure, similar to a colour spectrum. Emotion words form clusters or groups around the prototypes, and further, the words and groups are organized within a hierarchy from abstract to concrete, such as POSITIVE EMOTIONS > LOVE > AFFECTION > ENDEARMENT. This framework assumes a necessary fluidity and some degree of overlap between categories with a flexibility that makes it particularly useful in its application for the present purpose. Based on this, presupposed categories were not used to categorize the words in the two lexicons in this study. Instead, clusters were formed by gradually grouping words together and considering them one by one based on the similarity of their meaning. The categories do not refer to the idea of basic emotions but to the broad themes emerging from the grouping of the words according to their meaning. When the emotion categories had been identified (ten for *Njáls saga* and nine for *Egils saga*), the words were organized in a hierarchy with overarching categories and subordinate categories.

The method forms a layered structure where the emotion words within each domain group reflect finer gradations of their head category, and their similarity can be a matter of degree. For example, the words *allreiðr* (very angry) and *styggr* (morose, irritated) both belong to the ANGER category of *Egils saga*, but the former denotes a much more intense form of the feeling of anger than the latter. Two categories of POSITIVE and NEGATIVE emotions are at the superordinate level of each lexicon. The middle level forms the positive categories of JOY, LOVE, COURAGE, and TRANQUILLITY, and the negative categories of ANGER, FEAR, SADNESS, and CONTEMPT and the category SURPRISE, which includes (in *Njáls saga*) both negative and neutral words. Where applicable, opposing categories of feelings are paired in Tables 2 and 3 below. The negative category of ENVY additionally emerged from *Njáls saga*. Some of the mid-level categories (FEAR, COURAGE, and LOVE) are divided into subcategories, but not completely identically for both sagas, as the lexicon for *Njáls saga* includes two subcategories beyond that of *Egils saga*. Overall, this provided 445 instances in which an emotion word is uttered: 250 from *Njáls saga* and 195 from *Egils saga*. Seventy-seven different emotion words were extracted from *Njáls saga*, and eighty-seven were taken from *Egils saga*.

Table 2. Words referring to an emotional state in *Egils saga**

EGILS SAGA **negative**		***EGILS SAGA*** **positive**	
SADNESS 8 (22)		**JOY 18 (41)**	
ALLÓKÁTR, ADJ.	*(very unhappy, sad)*	ALLFEGINN, ADJ.	*(very glad, joyful)*
HARMA, V.	*(mourn)*	ALLFEGINSAMLIGA, ADV.	*(very joyfully)*
HARMDAUÐI, ADJ.	*(mourned)*	ALLGLAÐR, ADJ.	*(very glad)*
HARMR, N. (8)	*(grief)*	ALLKÁTR, ADJ. (8)	*(very cheerful, happy)*
HRYGGR, ADJ.	*(sad, grieved)*	EINTEITI, ADJ.	*(in very good spirits)*
ÓGLEÐI, N. (5)	*(unhappiness, sadness)*	FEGINN, ADJ. (5)	*(glad, joyful)*
ÓKÁTR, ADJ. (4)	*(unhappy, sad)*	FEGINSAMLIGA, ADV. (5)	*(joyfully)*
SORG, N.	*(grief, sorrow)*	GLAÐA, V.	*(gladden)*
		GLAÐR, ADJ.	*(glad)*
		GLEÐI, N. (3)	*(gladness, merriment)*
		GLEÐIMAÐR, N. (2)	*(a cheery man)*
		GLEÐJA, V. (3)	*(gladden, enliven)*
		GLÝJAÐR, ADJ.	*(gleeful, cheerful)*
		HRESSA, V. (3)	*(cheer up)*
		Í GÓÐU (ADJ.) SKAPI	*(in good spirits)*
		KÁTR, ADJ. (2)	*(cheerful, happy)*
		LÉTTR, ADJ.	*(cheerful)*
		ÓHRYGGR, ADJ.	*(lit.: un-grieved)*
FEAR 9 (14)		**COURAGE 10 (21)**	
▸ ***FEAR***		▸ ***BRAVERY***	
HRÆÐASK, V. (3)	*(be afraid of, fear)*	FULLHUGI, N.	*(man without fear)*
HRÆÐSLUGŒÐI N.	*(fear, actions from fear)*	HAFA (V.) HUG	*(have courage)*
ÓASK, V.	*(dread, fear)*	HERÐA (V.) HUGINN	*(gather one's courage)*
ÓTTASK, V. (3)	*(fear)*	HUGAÐR, ADJ.	*(courageous)*
ÓTTI, N. (2)	*(fear, dread)*	OFRHUGI, N.	*(bravery)*
SKELFA, N.	*(frighten)*	ÓTTALAUSS, ADJ. (2)	*(fearless)*
SKELKR, N.	*(fear, fright)*	ÞORA, V. (6)	*(have courage)*
▸ ***COWARDICE***		▸ ***AUDACITY***	
ÓDJARFR (ADJ.)	*(un-daring)*	DIRFÐ, N. (2)	*(daring, boldness)*
▸ ***ANXIETY***		DJARFLIGA, ADV. (2)	*(daringly, boldly)*
HAFA ÁHYGGJU (N.)	*(anxious, worried)*	DJARFR, ADJ. (4)	*(daring, audacious)*

* Numbers following each heading refer to how many words are in the category. Numbers in parenthesis refer to the frequency. The absence of a number indicates the word occurs only once.

EGILS SAGA negative

ANGER 14 (37)

ALLÓFRÝNN, ADJ.	*(very sullen, resentful)*
ALLREIÐR, ADJ. (3)	*(very angry)*
HEIPT, N. (2)	*(fury, spiteful anger)*
HEIPTUGLIGR, ADJ.	*(spiteful, virulent)*
ÓBLÍÐR, ADJ.	*(harsh, [lit.: un-gentle])*
ÓFRÝNN, ADJ.	*(sullen, resentful, morose)*
REIÐASK, V. (2)	*(become angry)*
REIÐI, N. (6)	*(anger)*
REIÐINN, ADJ.	*(quick to anger)*
REIÐR, ADJ. (12)	*(angry)*
SNELLT, ADV.	*(angrily)*
STYGGLIGA, ADV.	*(angrily, harshly)*
STYGGR, ADJ. (4)	*(morose, irritated)*
ÞYKKJA, N.	*(anger, resentment)*

CONTEMPT 8 (10)

ALLÞUNGR (ADJ.) TIL	*(very unfriendly of mind)*
FÁTT (ADJ.) [UM] MEÐ (2)	*(a strained relationship)*
FJÁNDSKAPR, N.	*(hostility)*
FJÓN, N.	*(hostility, hatred)*
HAFA (V.) ÞUNGAN HUG Á (2)	*(unfriendly of mind)*
HATASK (V.) VIÐ	*(hostile towards)*
ÚLFÚÐ, N.	*(hostility, enmity)*
VERA ALLILLA (ADV.) TIL	*(have much antipathy or dislike)*

SURPRISE 1 (3)

UNDRA, V. (3) *	*(wonder)*

EGILS SAGA positive

TRANQUILLITY 4 (6)

HÓGVÆRR, ADJ.	*(gentle, meek of mind)*
KYRRLÁTR, ADJ. (2)	*(calm, gentle)*
STILLILIGA, ADV. (2)	*(calmly, composedly)*
STILLTR, ADJ.	*(tempered, composed)*

LOVE 15 (41)

▸ ***LOVE***

ALLKÆRR, ADJ. (2)	*(very dear, beloved)*
ÁST, N.	*(love)*
ÁSTÚÐIGR, ADJ.	*(loving)*
ÁSTVINÁTTA, N.	*(intimate friendship)*
ÁSTVINR, N.	*(beloved, dear friend)*
ÁVARÐR, ADJ.	*(dear, beloved)*
ELSKA, N.	*(love)*
ELSKR [AT], ADJ. (2)	*(love, be fond of)*
KÆRLEIKR, N. (11)	*(love, intimacy)*
KÆRR, ADJ. (8)	*(dear, beloved)*
UNNA, V. (7)	*(love)*

▸ ***AFFECTION***

BLÍÐA, N. (2)	*(gentleness, affection)*
BLÍÐR, ADJ.	*(gentle, affectionate)*
BLÍÐSKAPR, N.	*(affection, friendly terms)*
FINNASK (V.) MIKIT UM	*(admire, be fond of)*

* Neither negative nor positive.

1.3 Analysis of the lexicon: *Egils saga*

Compared to Icelandic novels of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the vocabulary of *Íslendingasǫgur* is small — the whole corpus of over thirty sagas contains only about twelve thousand and four hundred different headwords or lexemes in total.[62] This seems to reflect their 'characteristically laconic and economic style'.[63] *Egils saga* is just over sixty-two thousand words long, but the number of individual lexemes is just roughly twenty-eight hundred.[64] The eighty-seven emotion words, which are listed in Table 2, form 3.1% of the sagas' vocabulary. The total count of emotion words in *Egils saga* (195) is 0.31% of the total word count in the saga.

The words are spread in nine emotion categories: the negative categories of SADNESS, FEAR, ANGER, and CONTEMPT; the positive categories of JOY, COURAGE, TRANQUILLITY, and LOVE; and SURPRISE which includes only a neutral word. Each category (except SURPRISE, which has only one word) includes different nuances of meanings. Fourteen of the eighty-seven emotion words only occur in poetry.[65]

In all, in *Egils saga*, more words communicate positive rather than negative emotions in the ratio of three to two. The biggest categories are LOVE and JOY. In close to half of the cases (42%) in which an emotion word is uttered in *Egils saga*, it connotes the positive feelings of either love or joy. Next comes ANGER, but these three categories are the biggest and are quite similar in size.

1.3.1 Royal anger

One would not characterize *Egils saga* as having especially joyous or loving themes, as its most prominent categories of emotion words suggest. By examining the most frequent

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[62] See Sverrir Tómasson and Örnólfur Thorsson, 'Um Íslendinga sögur', p. 505. Lexemes are the minimal units that form a lexicon. They are the headwords found listed in a dictionary. One lexeme can include different inflections that belong to the same syntactic category. Thus, the noun 'anger' and its many inflectional forms comprise one lexeme, but the verb 'angry' and its different forms are another lexeme.

[63] Þórir Óskarsson, 'Rhetoric and Style', p. 365. On the style of the *Íslendingasǫgur*, see especially pp. 364–66. On general saga style, see Sävborg, 'Style'; Vésteinn Ólason, *Dialogues*, pp. 95–119.

[64] See Sverrir Tómasson and Örnólfur Thorsson, 'Um Íslendinga sögur', p. 504.

[65] *ávarðr* (dear), *fjón* (hatred), *glaða* (gladden), *glaðr* (glad), *glýjaðr* (cheerful), *heipt* (fury), *heiptugligr* (spiteful or virulent), *hugaðr* (courageous), *óask* (dread or fear), *ofrhugi* (bravery), *óhryggr* (un-sad), *skelfa* (frighten), *sorg* (sorrow), and *þykkja* (anger or angry resentment).

words in the categories of JOY and LOVE, it emerges that, in many instances, the words refer to the emotions of royals and announce their temper, such as their fondness or dislike of their subjects' actions and loyalty. Therefore, many sentences of this type appear:

> var konungr allkátr[66]
> konungr gladdisk þá[67]
> í miklum kærleik við konung[68]
> konungr hefir mikla elsku á þér[69]

This is also true for the ANGER category, where more than half of the occurrences refer to the king's anger (twenty occurrences out of thirty-seven). The element of the saga that deals with the relationship of Egill and his kin with Norwegian royalty seems to contribute to the number of instances of these emotion word categories.[70] *Ira regis*, or royal anger, is a specific display of anger tied to kings, queens, and other royals in the literature and the learned writings of the medieval West.[71] In these writings, the king's expression of his anger is portrayed as primarily demonstrative, functioning as a strategic ruling device. This involves the king publicly displaying joy and anger alternately, controlling his subjects by giving illustrative signals of his moods.[72] As such, it forms a part of the king's 'technology of power'.[73]

The demonstration of the king's emotions on these occasions was encoded in 'scripts and schemas' that were incorporated into political processes; 'it was part of an

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[66] *Eg*, p. 30. 'The king was in very good spirits.'
[67] *Eg*, p. 35. 'The king became glad.'
[68] *Eg*, p. 177. 'Very intimate with the king.'
[69] *Eg*, p. 199. 'The king has much affection for you.'
[70] Indeed, *Egils saga* has stylistically much in common with the Old Norse genre of *konungasögur* (kings' sagas); see, e.g., Ármann Jakobsson, 'Our Norwegian Friend'. For the most recent contribution of many on the same authorship of *Egils saga* and the *konungasaga Heimskringla*, see Haukur Þorgeirsson, 'How Similar Are Heimskringla and Egils saga? An Application of Burrows' Delta to Icelandic Texts'.
[71] See Althoff, '*Ira Regis*', pp. 59–60, 74; White, 'Politics of Anger', p. 151; Barton, 'Zealous Anger', p. 159. These essays give a thorough account on the concept of royal anger in the medieval West, along with other essays on the social function of anger in the Middle Ages in *Anger's Past*, ed. by Rosenwein.
[72] White, 'Politics of Anger', pp. 142–43.
[73] White, 'Politics of Anger', p. 151.

entire discourse of feuding or retaliatory disputing', Stephen White argues.[74] Therefore, the expression of just and righteous royal anger was strategic; a ruling practice as well as an illustration of the sovereignty of the king.[75] Such royal anger appears to be prominent in *Egils saga*. In more than half of the cases in the ANGER category, the words refer to a king or jarl displaying his anger at certain actions of his subjects, such as the following:

konungr var reiðr[76]
bað konung vera eigi reiðan[77]
Konungr reiddisk mjǫk við rœður þessar[78]
konungr er reiðr[79]
varð [Eiríkr konungur] reiðr mjǫk[80]
Allreiðr var konungr nú[81]
hafði hann ok fengit reiði konungs[82]
verða fyrir reiði konungs[83]
þykkjast eigi mega bera reiði yðra [konungs] [84]
hann varð fyrir reiði Bjarnar Svíakonungs[85]
Konungr varð við styggr[86]
Konungur var heldr styggr ok óblíðr til Arinbjarnar[87]

A representative example is the following account in *Egils saga* that tells of the disputes between Þórólfr Kveld-Úlfsson and King Haraldr *lúfa* of Norway in Chapters 11–22. These chapters tell of how the sons of Hildiríðr surely and steadily succeed in defaming Þórólfr to the king. The brothers convince the king that Þórólfr aspires to surpass him and perhaps overthrow him. In the beginning, Þórólfr is close to King Haraldr, who has given Þórólfr the royal title of 'lendr maðr'.[88] However, the king becomes angry when Þórólfr

[74] Ibid., p. 146.
[75] Barton, 'Zealous Anger', p. 158.
[76] *Eg*, pp. 13, 29, 34. 'The king was angry.'
[77] *Eg*, p. 13. 'Asked the king not to be angry.'
[78] *Eg*, p. 32. 'The king became very angry at this talk.'
[79] *Eg*, p. 158. 'The king is angry.'
[80] *Eg*, p. 160. '[King Eiríkr] became very angry.'
[81] *Eg*, p. 182. 'The king was now very angry.'
[82] *Eg*, p. 71. 'Also, he had suffered the anger of the king.'
[83] *Eg*, p. 111. 'Suffer the anger of the king.'
[84] *Eg*, p. 170. 'Do not want to suffer your [the king's] anger.'
[85] *Eg*, p. 182. 'He suffered the anger of Bjǫrn, king of Swedes.'
[86] *Eg*, p. 13. 'At this, the king fell into a bad temper.'
[87] *Eg*, p. 216. 'The king was rather irritable and harsh at Arinbjǫrn.'
[88] *Eg*, p. 24. *Lendr maðr* was a title for someone who held lands for the king and had related obligations.

surpasses him in the number of followers at a feast. The king's displeasure at this is displayed by him becoming 'ókátr' and he 'roðnaði ok mælti ekki, ok þóttusk menn finna, at hann var reiðr'.[89] Þórólfr soothes the king's anger with appeasing talk and the gift of a great ship. The king's mood turns at this, and he 'gerði sik þá blíðan ok kátan'.[90] Next, it is noted that King Haraldr sits 'allkátr'[91] at a feast. There, the sons of Hildiríðr tell the king that Þórólfr plans to betray him. The king 'reiddisk mjǫk',[92] but he simultaneously is pleased with the gifts that the sons of Hildiríðr brought him. At the mention of Þórólfr's name, the king demonstrates his anger so that he 'svarar engu, ok sáu menn, at hann var reiðr'.[93] Þórólfr gives him beaver skins and other treasures, and the king's mood turns positive again. He becomes glad and is willing to listen to Þórólfr's point of view.[94] Nevertheless, Þórólfr is defamed again, and King Haraldr becomes 'inn reiðasti'[95] again. Þórólfr consults with his friends, and they discuss how the king's 'skap'[96] might be turning. Subsequently, Þórólfr attempts to appease the king with gifts and reassurance but to no avail. King Haraldr demands full surrender, which Þórólfr is not willing to provide. The affair concludes with King Haraldr slaying Þórólfr in battle.[97]

Throughout the whole account, the swinging mood of King Haraldr is central, and it is carefully noted what actions arouse his anger and how his subjects try to appease it. The king's anger has a clear demonstrative feature: it is displayed vividly in public by reddening and not speaking, and it is noted in the text that the men could see that the king was angry. In these scenes, King Haraldr alternates in a script-like way between displaying anger and joy as a strategic ruling device as fits his political aim of controlling his subjects and maintaining his power. Similar examples of royal anger appear throughout *Egils saga*. This narrative device results in the prominence of words connoting anger, joy, and love in the saga's lexicon of emotion words; most cases are tied to this element of strategic royal 'technology of power'.[98]

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[89] *Eg*, p. 29. 'Cheerless.' 'Turned red and did not speak, and men could feel that he was angry.'
[90] *Eg*, p. 29. 'Turned mild and cheerful.'
[91] *Eg*, p. 30. 'Very cheerful.'
[92] *Eg*, p. 32. 'Becomes very angry.'
[93] *Eg*, p. 34. 'Answers nothing, and people could see that he was angry.'
[94] *Eg*, p. 35.
[95] *Eg*, p. 38. 'Most angry.'
[96] *Eg*, p. 38. 'Mood.'
[97] *Eg*, p. 54.
[98] White, 'Politics of Anger', p. 151.

1.3.2 Formulas

It is evident from the above that the frequent appearance of words denoting anger in *Egils saga* are part of a narrative formula involving royal anger. *Íslendingasǫgur* are characterized by many formulaic locutions when people and events are described, and indeed formulas have been noted as 'a typical feature of saga style'.[99] Many repeated scenes and situations have their own particular formula. Thus, in the corpus, concerning how characters are introduced, well over one hundred examples exist of men entering the saga described as *miklir ok sterkir* (great and strong).[100]

Such formulas are narrative constructions that signal to the audience how to understand what they read or hear. Thus, as Daniel Sävborg argues, they function by 'arousing the expectation of the audience or reader', and they 'are loaded with meaning necessary for the interpretation of the events, characters, and plot'.[101] Sävborg, for example, identifies formulas that express amorous feelings through behaviour, such as when a man and a woman *sitja á tali* (sit and converse), *venja kvámur sínar* (visit frequently), *sitja hjá* (sit together), and give gifts,[102] as well as through physical expressions in the form of looks, kissing, and sitting on the knee or lap.[103]

In *Egils saga*, 76% of the emotion words in the lexicon above are only used once or twice. When the other 24%, which are used more often, are examined, it emerges that these words are often a part of a formula, such as is applied in the case of royal anger. Another example is how almost exclusively and repeatedly the words *feginn* (glad, joyful), *allfeginn* (very joyful), *feginsamliga* (gladly or joyfully), and *allfeginsamliga* (very joyfully) are used when someone is received upon return from somewhere:

> Tók hann við þeim allfeginsamliga[104]
> tók hann við honum feginsamliga[105]
> tók Brynjólfr þá við þeim feginsamliga[106]

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[99] Sävborg, 'Style', p. 115. For a thorough overview on research on formulas in saga literature, see ibid., pp. 115–19; see also Vésteinn Ólason, *Dialogues*, pp. 93, 112.
[100] 'Great and strong.' See Sverrir Tómasson and Örnólfur Thorsson, 'Um Íslendinga sögur', pp. 505–06, including a list of examples. On the formulaic use of grammatical appositions in the sagas, see Heinrichs, 'The Apposition', p. 25.
[101] Sävborg, 'Style', p. 118.
[102] Sävborg, *Sagan om kärleken*, pp. 45, 51, 55, 57. Sävborg lists scores of examples from the corpus.
[103] Ibid., pp. 64–67.
[104] *Eg*, p. 19. 'He received them very joyfully.'
[105] *Eg*, p. 81. 'He received him joyfully.'

> tók hann feginsamlega við þeim[107]
> Þeir Þórólfr urðu allfegnir, er Egill kom ofan[108]
> varð hann þá feginn, er Egill kom heim[109]
> tók Þórir feginsamliga við konungssyni[110]
> var þar tekit við honum vel ok feginsamliga[111]
> Egill fór heim til bús síns; urðu menn honum fegnir[112]
> ek em feginn orðinn, Egill, er þú ert kominn[113]

The same applies to the formula of men repeatedly being *allkátir* (very joyful) when feasting and drinking[114] and being in *kærleikar* (affection or intimacy) when describing a good, secure relationship with a royal:

> komsk hann í ina mestu kærleika við konung[115]
> nú er Þórólfr þar í allmiklum kærleikum af konungi[116]
> skilðusk þeir konungr með inum mesta kærleik[117]
> skilðusk þá með kærleik miklum[118]
> Þórir var þá í inum mestum kærleikum við konung[119]
> Kærleikar miklir váru með þeim Þórólfi ok Gunnhildi[120]
> í miklum kærleik við konunginn[121]
> var kominn í kærleika mikla við konunga[122]

The other part — the 76% of the lexicon only used once or twice — are words applied in a specific context in a purposeful, precise way. A good example of how this is done is in relation to Egill's son, Þorsteinn, who is at the centre of the saga in the last ten chapters.

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[106] *Eg*, p. 89. 'Brynjólfr then received them joyfully.'
[107] *Eg*, p. 92. 'He received them joyfully.'
[108] *Eg*, p. 118. 'Þórólfr and the others became very joyful when Egill came down.'
[109] *Eg*, p. 151. 'He became joyful when Egill came home.'
[110] *Eg*, p. 166. 'Þórir received the king's son joyfully.'
[111] *Eg*, p. 174. 'He was received there well and joyfully.'
[112] *Eg*, p. 240. 'Egill went home to his farm; people became joyful at his coming.'
[113] *Eg*, p. 284. 'I have become joyful, Egill, at your coming.'
[114] *Eg*: 'Gengu inn í stofu ok mǫtuðusk ok váru allkátir ok drukku' (entered the room and dined and were very joyful and drank), (pp. 115–16); 'Þá drukku þau saman um kveldit ok váru allkát' (Then, they drank together in the evening and were very merry), (p. 121); 'settusk hjá þeim ok váru allkátir; drukku fyrst sveitardrykkju' (sat down with them and were very merry, and at first, they all drank from the same horn), (p. 125).
[115] *Eg*, p. 10. 'He became very intimate with the king.'
[116] *Eg*, p. 20. 'Þórólfr now remains very intimate with the king.'
[117] *Eg*, p. 24. 'He departed with the king with much intimacy.'
[118] *Eg*, p. 29. 'They departed with much intimacy.'
[119] *Eg*, p. 90. 'Þórir was then in much intimacy with the king.'
[120] *Eg*, p. 94. 'Much intimacy was between Þórólfr and Gunnhildr.'
[121] *Eg*, p. 177. 'In much intimacy with the king.'
[122] *Eg*, p. 212. 'Had become very intimate with kings.'

Þorsteinn is baptized as a Christian when the new faith arrives in Iceland and builds a church at Borg,[123] whereas Egill remains a heathen his whole life.[124] Egill has grown old and decrepit and can be seen as representing the past ways at this point in the saga, a pagan culture that is in many ways coming to an end. This is underlined by emphasizing Þorsteinn as Egill's successor in the last chapters of the saga and how different the two are in their emotional character. In most ways, Þorsteinn is the emotional antithesis of his father. The narrator describes Þorsteinn as 'órefjusamr ok réttlátr ok óáleitinn við menn'.[125] While Egill is notorious for his extreme temper, all the emotion words in the category TRANQUILLITY refer to Þorsteinn: *hógværr* (gentle), *kyrrlátr* (calm), *stilltr* (tempered),[126] and *stilliliga* (composedly).[127] In addition to being wise, strong, blond, and beautiful,[128] Þorsteinn's disposition can be illustrated with reference to what Bandlien has described as the Christian ideal of 'rational, tempered and civilized' masculinity,[129] whereas Egill rather conforms to the Old Norse 'aggressive masculine ethic'.[130] The differences in the choice of words used to describe the emotions of the father Egill and his son Þorsteinn reflect how specifically the emotion words are applied in the saga, a point further illustrated in other themes, such as gender and poetic language, to which I turn next.

1.3.3 Gender differences and Ásgerðr Bjǫrnsdóttir

Egils saga is almost void of emotion words about women's feelings. A woman's emotion is only mentioned eleven times in the saga out of the 195 occurrences. Five of those cases concern Queen Gunnhildr's royal feelings of like or dislike[131] and can be viewed in the same light as the examples above on royal anger. Þorgerðr's feelings are noted once from

[123] *Eg*, p. 299.
[124] At King Aðalsteinn's request, Egill gets *prímsignaðr* (takes the sign of the cross) to interact with Christians. Those who did so kept their faith and were not turning to Christianity. *Eg*, p. 128–29.
[125] *Eg*, p. 293. 'Un-deceitful, just and unobtrusive.'
[126] *Eg*, p. 274 (all three).
[127] *Eg*, p. 277.
[128] *Eg*, pp. 274.
[129] Bandlien, 'Man or Monster?', p. 164.
[130] Meulengracht Sørensen, *The Unmanly Man*, p. 21. Egill's masculinity is discussed further in Section 3.1 of this dissertation.
[131] These are *kærleikr* (intimacy), *Eg*, p. 94; *kærr* (dear), pp. 106, 123, 152; *allþungr til* (very unfriendly of mind towards), p. 150.

the mouth of her father Egill: 'mikla ást hefir þú sýnt við mik',[132] and three examples concern minor female characters that briefly enter the saga (*djarfr*, *ókátr*, *feginn*).[133] Lastly, the feelings of Ásgerðr Bjǫrnsdóttir are noted twice (*ókátr*, *unna*).[134] The latter concerns the occasion during which it is noted that much love exists between her and her son Þorsteinn, whereas Egill does not love his son much: 'Egill unni honum lítit; Þorsteinn var ok ekki við hann ástúðigr, en þau Ásgerðr ok Þorsteinn unnusk mikit.'[135]

This is the only example from the saga where so many emotion words (three) are found in the same sentence. Yet, this brief account is a fine example of the emotive style of the saga. In just a handful of words, a tense and dramatic family situation is laid out, where the cold contempt between father and son is contrasted with much love and affection between the son and his mother. The scene also reverberates the strained relationship between Egill and his own father, Skalla-Grímr (who tried to kill him as a child and subsequently did not speak to him for a whole winter).[136]

The other time that Ásgerðr's feelings are noted is when Egill tells her that his brother Þórólfr, her husband, is dead. Egill has probably loved Ásgerðr since they were adolescents,[137] and he now offers her his care, perhaps insinuating or suggesting that they marry. Her response is very obscure: 'Ásgerðr varð mjǫk ókát við þá sǫgu, en svaraði vel rœðum Egils ok tók lítit af ǫllu.'[138]

The reader is told that Ásgerðr becomes unhappy at hearing that her husband is dead, but she gives little or no answer to Egill's offer. Egill reacts to her faint response by falling into a deep melancholy (see Chapter 3) and lastly confides in his best friend Arinbjǫrn how much he loves her. As the object of Egill's love, Ásgerðr is one of the

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[132] *Eg*, p. 244–45. 'You have demonstrated much love towards me.'
[133] 'Daring', 'unhappy', 'joyful'. *Eg*, pp. 85, 201, 230, respectively.
[134] *Eg*, pp. 148, 274, respectively.
[135] *Eg*, p. 274. 'Egill loved him little; Þorsteinn was likewise not loving towards him, but Ásgerðr and Þorsteinn loved each other very much.'
[136] *Eg*, pp. 101–02. Ármann Jakobsson writes about the relationship between Egill and his father in his '"Egils saga" and Empathy'.
[137] On the early onset of Egill's love for Ásgerðr, see Torfi H. Tulinius, *Skáldið í skriftinni*, pp. 50–51; Bredsdorff, *Chaos and Love*, pp. 23–34; Ármann Jakobsson, '"Egils saga" and Empathy', pp. 11, 16; Brynja Þorgeirsdóttir, 'Emotions of a Vulnerable Viking'. On Egill's feelings towards Ásgerðr, see Sections 3.2 and 1.3.3.
[138] *Eg*, p. 148. 'Ásgerðr became very unhappy at hearing this, she answered Egill's words politely but gave little and indefinite answers.' *Tók lítit af ǫllu* is an idiom that translates literally as 'took little of everything'.

central figures in the saga, and Egill's strong feelings towards her have decisive effects on how the narrative unfolds.[139] How Ásgerðr feels about him, however, remains rather hidden. When Egill finally gathers the courage to ask her to marry him, she does not disclose her will but simply dutifully refers the matter twice to her father and uncle to decide:

> Síðan bar Egill þat mál fyrir Ásgerði, en hon skaut til ráða fǫður síns og Arinbjarnar, frænda síns; síðan rœðir Arinbjǫrn við Ásgerði, ok hafði hún in sǫmu svǫr fyrir sér; Arinbjǫrn fýsti þessa ráðs. Síðan fara þeir Arinbjǫrn ok Egill á fund Bjarnar, ok hefr Egill þá bónorð ok bað Ásgerðar, dóttur Bjarnar; Bjǫrn tók því máli vel ok sagði, at Arinbjǫrn myndi því mjǫk ráða.[140]

The matter is finally concluded by Egill becoming betrothed to Ásgerðr. This carousel of referrals to arrive at the consent to the betrothal borders on the line of the comic. The fact that Ásgerðr did not express approval when repeatedly given the chance can be taken to indicate that she is not too keen on marrying Egill, but she does not assert opposition to it either, although her dull response might consist of a statement thereof. Within the narrative, Ásgerðr's figure functions as the focus of Egill's desire, but she is, herself, almost invisible. She does not have an opinion or a voice. She never has direct speech in the entire saga, and her feelings are implied only in relation to Egill's reactions to them. In this sense, she plays a narrative role similar to that of many idealized ladies in the courtly romances: her persona exists only in the form of a passive object of Egill's desire.

1.3.4 The speaker and the poetic voice

The speaker of the emotion words in *Egils saga* is most often the narrator, or in two-thirds of the cases. Most frequently, the narrator is noting the feelings of royals (forty-two instances) or Egill (twenty-eight instances). As has been pointed out, the external focalization of the narrative voice in the genre of *Íslendingasǫgur* means that the

[139] See, e.g., Torfi H. Tulinius, *Skáldið í skriftinni*, pp. 50–51.
[140] *Eg*, p. 150. 'Then Egill raised the matter to Ásgerðr, but she referred it to her father and her uncle Arinbjǫrn; then Arinbjǫrn spoke with Ásgerðr, and she gave the same answer. Arinbjǫrn wanted the betrothal to happen. Then Arinbjǫrn and Egill went to see Bjǫrn, and Egill proposed to Ásgerðr, the daughter of Bjǫrn. Bjǫrn took this matter well and said that Arinbjǫrn would decide.'

characters' inner emotional processes are rarely analysed in the prose.[141] It should nevertheless be observed that multiple examples in this lexicon exist where the narrator does have access to the inner lives of the characters and communicates how they feel, as the following samples demonstrate:

> Arinbjǫrn varð reiðr mjǫk, er Þóra, fǫðursystir hans, var kölluð ambátt.[142]
> Egill var nú allreiðr[143]
> Kveld-Úlfr spurði fall Þórólfs, sonar síns; varð hann hryggr við þessi tíðendi[144]
> herði [Egill] þá huginn[145]
> Skalla-Grímr varð við þat allglaðr[146]
> var Þórólfr allókátr ok svá Arinbjǫrn[147]
> gerðisk Egill þá enn einteiti[148]
> unni honum ok vel faðir ok móðir.[149]
> Egill unni honum mikit[150]

Here, the narrator appears omniscient, describing in direct words how characters feel and telling the audience that they are angry, sad, mournful, striving for courage, glad, merry, or in love. However, the feelings are not analysed or commented on further. The instances are brief, quick, and usually contain only one emotion word, occasionally two, but only once contain three.

When emotion words are uttered by a character in *Egils saga*, it is most often not about the character's own feelings but about the feelings of others (in two-thirds of the cases). Representative examples include these words of Arinbjǫrn: 'konungr er reiðr svá mjǫk, at mér er ván at várir menn sæti afarkostum af honum',[151] Egill's question to a

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[141] See Sävborg, 'Style', p. 123; Sif Rikhardsdottir, *Emotions in Old Norse Literature*, p. 57; Miller, 'Emotions and the Sagas', pp. 94–97.
[142] *Eg*, p. 153. 'Arinbjǫrn became very angry when Þóra, his father's sister, was referred to as a slave.'
[143] *Eg*, p. 170. 'Egill was now very angry.'
[144] *Eg*, p. 60. 'Kveld-Úlfr learned that Þórólfr had died; he became mournful at this news.'
[145] *Eg*, p. 178. '[Egill] then plucked up his courage.'
[146] *Eg*, p. 87. 'Skalla-Grímr became very glad at that.'
[147] *Eg*, p. 113. 'Þórólfr was very unhappy, as was Arinbjǫrn.'
[148] *Eg*, p. 216. 'Egill turned to a very good mood'.
[149] *Eg*, p. 80. 'His father and mother loved him much.'
[150] *Eg*, p. 243. 'Egill loved him much.'
[151] *Eg*, p. 58. 'The king is so very angry, that I expect that my men will receive harsh treatment from him.'

young woman: 'Hvat grætr þú, mær? Ek sé þik aldri káta',[152] and his words to his daughter: 'mikla ást hefir þú sýnt við mik."[153]

Out of the 195 instances in which an emotion word is uttered in the saga, only twenty-three apply to characters expressing their own feelings. The data thus conform to the general finding that characters in *Íslendingasǫgur* 'rarely express their emotions themselves'.[154] In accordance with Egill's centrality in the saga, in eighteen of those twenty-three cases, it is Egill who is speaking about his own emotions. A clear difference exists here between the prose and the poetry. Egill's self-expression of emotions mainly occurs in his poems. Out of the eighteen instances, fifteen occur in his poetry:[155]

ástvinr, n.	(beloved)	*Sonatorrek* 7[156]
glaðr, adj.	(glad)	*Sonatorrek* 25[157]
gleðja, v.	(gladden)	*Lausavísa* 5[158]
harmr, n. (3)	(grief)	*Lausavísur* 17, 20, 59[159]
heipt, n. (2)	(fury)	*Lausavísur* 31, 50[160]
óhryggr, adj.	(un-grieved)	*Sonatorrek* 25[161]
reiði, n.	(anger)	*Lausavísa* 14[162]
sorg, n.	(sorrow)	*Lausavísa* 24[163]
undra, v.	(wonder)	*Lausavísa* 57[164]
þora, v (2)	(have courage)	*Arinbjarnarkviða* 6,[165] *Lausavísa* 23[166]
þykkja, n.	(angry resentment)	*Lausavísa* 47[167]

[152] *Eg*, p. 201. 'What are you crying over, young girl? I never see you cheerful.'
[153] *Eg*, pp. 244–45. 'You have shown me much love.'
[154] Sävborg, 'Style', p. 118; see also Vésteinn Ólason, *Dialogues*, pp. 113–14; and Sävborg, *Sagan om kärleken*, pp. 97, 101, 246. This is especially true when it comes to the expression of love, Sävborg demonstrates. He notes only three examples in the whole corpus of *Íslendingasǫgur* of a character expressing his love for another person; see his *Sagan om kärleken*, pp. 101–02.
[155] The instances from the prose are 'Hver ván er, at ek muna lifa vilja við harm þenna?' (How can I be expected to want to live with such grief?), *Eg*, p. 254; 'Hræðumk ek bjǫrninn' (I am afraid of the bear), *Eg*, p. 167; 'áhyggjur hefi ek miklar' (I have great worries), *Eg*, p. 214.
[156] *Eg*, p. 248, *Skj* I, p. 35.
[157] *Eg*, p. 256, *Skj* I, p. 37.
[158] *Eg*, p. 82, *Skj* I, p. 603.
[159] *Eg*, p. 142, *Skj* I, p. 55; *Eg*, p. 145, *Skj* I, p. 45; *Eg*, p. 295, *Skj* I, p. 52.
[160] *Eg*, p. 170, Skj I, p. 47; *Eg*, p. 269, Skj I, p. 51.
[161] *Eg*, p. 256, *Skj* I, p. 37.
[162] *Eg*, p. 121, *Skj* I, p. 44.
[163] *Eg*, p. 149, *Skj* I, p. 45.
[164] *Eg*, p. 293, *Skj* I, p. 52.
[165] *Eg*, p. 259, *Skj* I, p. 38.
[166] *Eg*, p. 148, *Skj* I, p. 45.

Skaldic poetry in the sagas has been shown to convey feelings, such as love and grief, more openly and in a more detailed way than is done in the prose, and the speakers analyse and describe their own emotions to a higher degree than in the prose.[168] However, while a statistical analysis such as this one confirms that self-expression of feelings occurs to a higher degree within the poetry than the prose, the use of emotion words comprises only a very small part of the conveyance of feelings in the poetry. The kennings used in Egill's poems to express feelings are analysed in Section 5.6 of this dissertation, and gestures and bodily metaphors are analysed in Section 6.1 and Chapter 3. The kennings and other kinds of circumlocutions in the poems, metaphors, rhythm, poetic language, and emotive themes that sometimes run through a whole poem, such as *Sonatorrek*, as well as the interaction of the poem with the prose, all work to intensify the emotive force of what is being expressed. These forcefully convey feelings in an artistic manner outside the narrow semantic scope of emotion words.

1.3.5 Conclusion

The emotion words that are found in *Egils saga* belong to nine different categories of emotion, where each category (but one) includes different nuances of the head word. Most of the words are used for a specific occasion, as only a minority (24%) are used more than twice in the saga. However, the words used most often enabled the identification of narrative patterns. The words that are used most often (such as combinations of *reiðr* (angry) and combinations of *feginn* (joyful)) are often a part of a formula applied in specific contexts, with the former to denote a king's anger and the latter to describe rejoicing at someone's return.

The analysis shows that the speaker of an emotion word is generally the narrator. If the emotion word is spoken by a character, it typically refers to the emotions of someone else. When the emotion word refers to the feelings of the speaker, as a rule, it occurs in poetry. In the cases of self-expression, it is unsurprisingly mostly Egill who

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[167] 'þykkiar' in M, 'þickjo' in K, which supports the emendation to 'þykkja' (angry resentment) in Bergljót Kristjánsdóttir and Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir's edition, *Egils saga*, p. 181, which I consider more likely to be correct. However, it is amended to 'þykkjumsk' in *Skj* I, p. 51, taken up in *Eg*, p. 228, which gives the meaning 'I regard'.

[168] See Sävborg, *Sagan om kärleken*, pp. 275–76; Sif Rikhardsdottir, *Emotions in Old Norse Literature*, pp. 85–97.

uses emotion words about his own feelings in the saga, and when he does so, it is usually in his poetry.

It is reasonable to view the emotional vocabulary of *Egils saga* as diverse and varied because a large majority of the words (76%) are used only once or twice and thus for a specific purpose. This demonstrates that emotion words are applied in the saga in a systematic, purposeful, and precise way.

1.4 Analysis of the lexicon: *Njáls saga*[169]

Njáls saga is about one hundred thousand words long, but the number of individual words or lexemes is just roughly thirty-one hundred.[170] Moreover, 2.5% of the lexemes in *Njáls saga* (seventy-seven) are emotion words, as shown below in Table 3. The total count of emotion words in *Njáls saga* (250) is 0.25% of the total word count in the saga.

The biggest emotion category when it comes to words in *Njáls saga* is ANGER. Words connoting this feeling are mentioned in 22% of all instances in which an emotion is named in the saga. Next comes FEAR (19% occurrence). *Njáls saga* also has categories that *Egils saga* does not have: ENVY and being TAKEN ABACK (a sub-category of SURPRISE). Both are from the overarching NEGATIVE category. Overall, more occurrences of words communicate negative emotions in *Njáls saga*, with the ratio of three to two.

[169] The lexicon includes words from poetry not included in the main text of the Svart á hvítu or Íslenzk fornrit editions, but which is published in an appendix in the latter. These are four words, *óttlauss* (fearless), *Nj*, p. 468, *djarfr* (bold), p. 471; *hræðask* (be afraid of), p. 477; and *reiðr* (angry), p. 479, all from stanzas included in either R or *Kálfalækjarbók* (AM 133, fol.).
[170] See Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir, 'Um Brennu-Njáls sögu', p. xvi. Numbers do not vary significantly between editions.

Table 3. Words referring to an emotional state in *Njáls saga**

NJÁLS SAGA **negative**		***NJÁLS SAGA*** **positive**	
SADNESS 11 (21)		**JOY 9 (26)**	
DAPR, ADJ.	*(sad)*	ALLKÁTR, ADJ.	*(very cheerful, happy)*
HARMA, V. (3)	*(mourn)*	FEGINN, ADJ. (13)	*(glad, joyful)*
HARMDAUÐI, ADJ. (3)	*(mourned)*	GLAÐR, ADJ. (3)	*(glad)*
HARMR, N. (3)	*(grief)*	GLEÐJA, V.	*(gladden, enliven)*
HARMSǪK, N. (2)	*(cause of grief)*	GLEÐIBRAGÐ, N.	*(merry looking)*
HUGSJÚKR, ADJ.	*(depressed,* lit. *mind-sick)*	HLŒGJA, V. (2)	*(exhilarate, cheer up)*
HǪRMULIGR, ADJ.	*(tragic, sad)*	KÁTLIGR, ADJ.	*(cheerful)*
SKAPÞUNGT, ADJ. (4)	*(of heavy mind)*	KÁTR, ADJ. (3)	*(cheerful, happy)*
SYRGJA, V.	*(mourn, grieve over)*	LÉTTR, ADJ.	*(cheerful)*
TREGI, N.	*(sorrow)*		
ÞYKKJA (V.) FYRIR	*(saddened, regretful, sorry)*		
FEAR 14 (48)		**COURAGE 8 (30)**	
▸ ***FEAR***		▸ ***BRAVERY***	
FELMTA, V.	*(be afraid)*	ALLÓHRÆDDR, ADJ.	*(very un-afraid)*
HRÆÐASK, V. (13)	*(be afraid of, fear)*	HUGAÐR, ADJ.	*(courageous)*
HRÆDDR, ADJ. (11)	*(afraid)*	OFRHUGI, N. (2)	*(fearless man)*
HRÆÐSLA, N. (3)	*(fear)*	ÓTTLAUSS, ADJ.	*(fearless)*
ÓTTAFULLR, ADJ. (1)	*(full of fear)*	ÞORA, V. (20)	*(have courage)*
ÓTTASK, V. (2)	*(fear)*	ÓHRÆDDR, ADJ. (2)	*(un-afraid)*
ÓTTI, N. (3)	*(fear, dread)*	▸ ***AUDACITY***	
ÆÐRA, N. (2)	*(fear, despair)*	DJARFLIGA, ADV. (2)	*(daringly, boldly)*
▸ ***COWARDICE***		DJARFR, ADJ.	*(bold, daring)*
ARGR, ADJ.	*(cowardly)*		
BLAUÐR, ADJ. (3)	*(cowardly)*		
HUGLAUSS, ADJ.	*(cowardly)*		
HUGLEYSI N.	*(cowardice)*		
RAGR, ADJ. (5)	*(cowardly, fainthearted)*		
▸ ***ANXIETY***			
ÁHYGGJA, N.	*(anxiety, worry)*		

* Numbers following each heading in the table refer to how many words are in the category. Numbers in parentheses refer to the frequency. The absence of a number indicates the word occurs only once.

NJÁLS SAGA **negative**	
ANGER 12 (54)	
ALLREIÐR, ADJ.	*(very angry)*
BEISKR, ADJ.	*(embittered, acrimonious)*
BRÁÐR, ADJ.	*(quick-tempered)*
GEISA, V. (2)	*(rage)*
REIÐASK, V. (10)	*(become angry)*
REIÐI, N. (11)	*(anger)*
REIÐR, ADJ. (22)	*(angry)*
SÍREIÐR, ADJ.	*(always angry)*
SKAPBRÁÐR, ADJ.	*(hot-tempered)*
STYGGR, ADJ. (2)	*(morose, irritated)*
VERA (V.) MIKIT Í SKAPI	*(be very upset)*
ŒÐI (N.) MIKIL	*(much rage, fury)*
CONTEMPT 6 (13)	
FÁLEIKR, N. (3)	*(strained/cold relation)*
MISLÍKA, V. (2)	*(dislike, resent)*
ÓÞOKKI, N. (3)	*(animosity, hostility)*
ÓÞYKKT, N.	*(ill-will, dislike, discord)*
FÁTT (ADJ.) UM MEÐ (3)	*(strained relationship)*
VERA ILLA (ADV.) TIL	*(have antipathy or dislike)*
ENVY 2 (6)	
ǪFUNDA, V. (5)	*(envy)*
ǪFUNDARMAÐR, N.	*(one who envies)*
SURPRISE 3 (10)	
▸ ***SHOCKED/TAKEN ABACK***	
BREGÐA (V.) Í BRÚN (2)	*(shocked, taken aback)*
BREGÐA (V.) VIÐ (6)	*(shocked, taken aback)*
▸ ***WONDER****	
UNDRA, V. (2)	*(wonder)*

NJÁLS SAGA **positive**	
TRANQUILLITY	**5 (12)**
HÓGVÆRR, ADJ. (2)	*(gentle, meek of mind)*
ORÐSTILLTR, ADJ.	*(moderate in words)*
SKAPGÓÐR, ADJ.	*(good-tempered)*
STILLA (V.) SIG	*(temper oneself)*
STILLTR, ADJ. (7)	*(tempered, composed)*
LOVE 9 (30)	
▸ ***LOVE***	
ÁST, N. (2)	*(love)*
ELSKR, ADJ.	*(love, be fond of)*
KÆRLEIKR, N.	*(love, intimacy)*
KÆRR, ADJ. (2)	*(dear, beloved)*
UNNA, V. (10)	*(love)*
LEGGJA (V.) HUG Á (3)	*(be in love with)*
▸ ***AFFECTION***	
BLÍÐA, N. (2)	*(gentleness, affection)*
BLÍÐLIGA, ADV. (4)	*(affectionately, gently)*
BLÍÐR, ADJ. (5)	*(gentle, affectionate)*

* Neither negative nor positive.

1.4.1 The speaker

Turning first to the speakers of the words, the data show that emotion words coming from the mouth of a character are more frequent in *Njáls saga* than *Egils saga*, or in roughly half of the cases an emotion word is uttered in the saga (compared to one-third in *Egils saga*). In fact, *Njáls saga* contains double the proportion of direct speech compared to *Egils saga*, as Peter Hallberg has demonstrated, and *Njáls saga* has the highest percentage (at 41% of the text) of direct speech of all the longer sagas.[171]

Even though emotion words are often spoken by the characters in *Njáls saga*, the words most frequently do not refer to their own feelings but those of others. In only about one-third of the instances in which a character speaks an emotion word, it concerns his or her own inner state (forty-two instances, of which five occur in poetry). These are spoken by twenty different characters, most often Gunnarr and Skarpheðinn (six times each), communicating their own fearlessness or anger. However, the few cases of self-expression include famous and much-quoted sentences, such as Gunnar saying 'mér þykkir meira fyrir en ǫðrum mǫnnum at vega menn'[172] and Njáll saying 'ek unna meira Hǫskuldi en sonum mínum, ok er ek spurða at hann var veginn, þótti mér sløkkt it sœtasta ljós augna minna'.[173] In Njáll's emotive speech, there is a rare elaboration and reiteration of an emotional state: 'Hǫrmuleg tíðendi […] ok er slíkt illt at vita, því at þat er sannligt at segja, at svá fellr mér nær um trega, at mér þœtti betra at hafa látit tvá sonu mína ok væri Hǫskuldr á lífi.'[174] Njáll's grief is dwelt on here more than is done in any scene found in the prose of *Egils saga*. The Christian context of Njáll's expressions is discussed in Section 7.3.4, but as Vésteinn Ólason points out, such unrestrained emotional talk 'is unusual and unquestionably reflects the influence of religious literature' on *Njáls saga*.[175]

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[171] Hallberg, 'Replik och dialog', p. 130. Hallberg investigated more than twenty sagas and found that the medium ratio of direct speech is about 30%; see ibid., p. 130.
[172] *Nj*, p. 139. 'The slaying of men saddens me more than other men.'
[173] *Nj*, p. 309. 'I loved Hǫskuldr more than any of my sons, and when I learned that he had been slayed, I felt like the dearest light of my eyes had been put out.'
[174] *Nj*, p. 281. 'Tragic news […] and this is terrible to hear, because it is true that I am so deeply stricken by grief, that I would think it better to have lost two of my sons and Hǫskuldr was still alive.'
[175] Vésteinn Ólason, *Dialogues*, p. 114.

When it comes to the narrative voice, however, it does not analyse the characters' inner emotional lives with words and usually applies only one or two emotion words but, nevertheless, has access to their psyche as the following examples show:

> Þá reiddisk Hǫskuldr, ok var fátt um með þeim brœðrum nǫkkura hríð.[176]
> Flosi spyrr víg Hǫskulds, ok fær honum þat mikillar áhyggju ok reiði, ok var hann þó vel stilltr.[177]
> var brúðrin allkát[178]
> var brúðrin dǫpr heldr[179]
> Gunnarr varð glaðr við þat.[180]
> Hon unni honum mikit ok mátti eigi stilla sik ok grét hástǫfum[181]
> Hann ǫfundaði mjǫk Gunnar frá Hlíðarenda.[182]
> Austmaðr gladdisk við þetta.[183]
> Þráinn unni henni lítit.[184]
> Gunnarr lagði hug á Bergljótu, frændkonu jarls[185]

Here, the narrator describes how characters feel in a direct way through emotional language. However, the feelings are not commented on further. The instances are brief, quick, and usually contain only one emotion word. In this way, the use of emotion words is similar to that in *Egils saga*, although with notable deviances concerning Njáll's speech.

1.4.2 Gunnarr Hámundarson and the application of royal anger

Njáls saga does not concern itself much with the interaction of its main characters with kings and other royalty. However, examples of royal anger appear in Chapter 88 of the saga, when Þráinn Sigfússon hides an escaped offender aboard his ship. This is the only scene in the saga that includes instances of royal anger in line with those that are

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[176] *Nj*, p. 7. 'Then Hǫskuldr became angry, and the relationship between the brothers was strained for some while.'
[177] *Nj*, p. 287. 'Flosi learns that Hǫskuldr has been slain, and this brings him much worry and anger, but even so, he remains calm.'
[178] *Nj*, p. 32. 'The bride was in very good spirits.'
[179] *Nj*, p. 22. 'The bride was rather sad.'
[180] *Nj*, p. 77. 'Gunnarr became glad at this.'
[181] *Nj*, p. 48. 'She loved him much and could not contain herself and cried loudly.'
[182] *Nj*, p. 119. 'He envied Gunnarr from Hlíðarendi much.'
[183] *Nj*, p. 426. 'The Eastman became glad at this.'
[184] *Nj*, p. 87. 'Þráinn didn't love her much.'
[185] *Nj*, p. 83. 'Gunnarr desired Bergljót, kinswoman of the jarl.'

described above, occurring in *Egils saga*. The escapee, Hrappr, has burnt Jarl Hákon's temple to the ground and killed some of his men. The jarl repeatedly boards Þráinn's ship and searches for the offender, each time to no avail. In each instance, the jarl displays his anger and, for example, becomes on one occasion 'svá reiðr, at ekki mátti við hann mæla'.[186] When Þráinn flatly denies having hidden the escapee, Hákon does not resort to violence but coldly notes: 'heldr vil ek, at þú níðisk á mér en ek á þér.'[187] Thus, it is stressed in the scene that it is honourable for a noble man like Hákon to show restraint, while it is also made clear that his mere display of anger arouses fear in his subjects.[188] But even though Jarl Hákon's anger is noted many times in this particular scene, no one's anger is mentioned more often in the saga than Gunnarr Hámundarson's, or in 21% of the cases the words *reiðask* (become angry), *reiði* (anger), and *reiðr* (anger) are used.

Gunnarr is not royal by blood. However, several methods are used in the saga to allude to his aristocratic and knightly image. When he is introduced, the description is that of a sublime noble hero. Apart from his beautiful appearance, ruddy cheeks and golden hair, he is described as:

> mikill maðr vexti ok sterkr, manna bezt vígr; hann hjó báðum hǫndum ok skaut, ef hann vildi, ok hann vá svo skjótt með sverði, at þrjú þóttu á lopti at sjá. Hann skaut manna bezt af boga ok hœfði allt þat, er hann skaut til; hann hljóp meir en hæð sína með ǫllum herklæðum, ok eigi skemmra aptr en fram fyrir sik; hann var syndr sem selur, ok eigi var sá leikr, at nǫkkurr þyrfti við hann at keppa, ok hefir svá verit sagt, at engi væri hans jafningi. […] Manna kurteisastr var hann.[189]

The word *kurteiss* (courteous), used to describe Gunnarr, came into Old Norse through translated romances in the thirteenth century, and the description of Gunnarr includes many features of a courteous knight. Among the traits that define Gunnarr are his

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[186] *Nj*, p. 219. 'Becomes so angry, that it was not possible to speak to him.'
[187] *Nj*, p. 220. 'I would rather have that you behave shamefully towards me than I towards you.'
[188] On restraint and honourable expression of emotions, see Chapter 7 of this dissertation.
[189] *Nj*, p. 53. 'Great in size and strong, the best of fighters; he could strike or throw with either hand if he wished, and he was so quick with his sword that there seemed to be three swords aloft at once. He shot from a bow better than anyone, and he never missed his mark. He jumped higher than his own height in full armour, and no less backwards than forwards. He could swim like a seal, and there was no game in which there was any point in competing with him, and it has been said that no man was his equal. […] He was the most courteous of men.'

superior skills in archery. Archery is described as the noblest sport, *höfðingligr*, in the *konungasögur* compilation *Heimskringla*,[190] but is not common in other genres of Old Norse sagas.

Additionally, apart from Gunnarr's superhuman physical qualities, gorgeous looks, and extravagant clothes,[191] he possesses a magical weapon[192] and an animal companion, an Irish royal dog called Sámr who has the intelligence of a man.[193] The dog is a gift from the grandson of King Myrkjartan of Ireland. This aligns Gunnarr with the noble heroes of the romances, such as the knight Yvain in Chrétien de Troyes' *Yvain (le Chevalier au lion)*, who had a lion by his side.[194] Much in the same way as the relationship between the lion and Yvain, Sámr can be viewed as a mirror of Gunnarr's psyche, an animal extension of his noble character. Their lives are entwined, for Gunnarr cannot be attacked in his home while the dog lives, as his enemies remark: 'þat má engi ætla, meðan hundrinn lifir'.[195] The death of one signals the death of the other.

Such is also the case in the *konungasaga* of King Óláfr Tryggvason. When the King Óláfr's dog, Vígi, hears of the death of his master, he howls loudly 'sva sem hann hefði hiart verk tekit [...] lagðiz hann niðr ok uilldi at engvm manni mat þiggia. [...] Tárin hrundu or augvnum niðr vm trynit. [...] ok la þar til þess er hann var dauðr'.[196] Accordingly, Gunnarr's enemies need to kill Sámr to reach Gunnarr. They slay the dog with an axe-blow through his skull to his brain — a death that resonates more with descriptions of battles between men rather than an animal being put to death — but not before Sámr has succeeded in tearing apart one of his attackers at the groin.[197] When Sámr is killed, the loudness of his howl is unheard of,[198] and when Gunnarr hears it, it signals for him his own death: 'Sárt ertú leikinn, Sámr fóstri, ok búð svá sé til ætlat at

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[190] Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, p. 734.
[191] Gunnarr's clothes are described in *Nj*, pp. 82–83, 85, 150.
[192] *Nj*, pp. 80–81 on Gunnarr's halberd.
[193] *Nj*, pp. 173, 186 on Sámr the dog.
[194] On the narrative function of the lion in *Yvain*, see Hunt, 'The Lion and Yvain'.
[195] *Nj*, p. 174. 'No one can accomplish that while the dog is alive.'
[196] *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar en mesta*, p. 299. 'As if he had a heart-ache [...] he lay down and refused to accept food from all men [...] Tears fell from his eyes and down his snout [...] and he lay there until he was dead.'
[197] *Nj*, p. 186. It is possible to read this incident as a metaphorical castration, a successful attack on the enemy's manhood. Thereby, the attacker is portrayed as vividly shamed by Sámr, and it is also underlined that his killing of the dog is dishonourable.
[198] Ibid.

skammt skyli okkar í meðal.'[199] These knightly connotations serve to underline the noble features of Gunnarr further.

The display and mentions of Gunnarr's anger function in the saga as a strategic ruling device. People in the saga who are subordinate to Gunnarr seek to avoid his anger, and when he displays it, they become afraid and do as Gunnarr wishes.[200] Þráinn Sigfússon refuses to kill Þórðr *leysingjason* because he does not want to suffer Gunnarr's anger: 'Eigi mun ek þat gera [...] því at þá mun ek hafa reiði Gunnars.'[201] In other cases, Gunnarr displays his anger as a threat, such as when he overhears the members of his household recite slanderous poetry, ridiculing his friend and closest ally, Njáll, for lacking a beard. The people are laughing loudly when Gunnarr abruptly enters the room:

> Ǫllum brá við mjǫk, er hann sá inn ganga; þǫgnuðu þá allir en áðr hafði þar verit hlátr mikill. Gunnarr var reiðr mjǫk [...] „ef nǫkkurr maðr hermir þessi orð, þá skal sá í brautu verða ok hafa þó reiði mína." En svá stóð þeim af honum mikil ógn, at engi þorði þessi orð at herma. Síðan gekk hann í braut.[202]

Here, Gunnarr does not threaten physical violence with bare words but threatens something that seems to be much more influential: that anyone acting against his decree 'will have his anger'. The people, including his wife, become so afraid that they do not dare to contradict his will. The pattern that emerges is that Gunnarr's anger is displayed in a noble, royal way. His anger functions in a demonstrative manner, as a ruling device, illustrating his power, and it follows the same script as *ira regis*, royal anger.

The frequent mention of Gunnarr's anger might seem to be in contrast to the description of him as 'stilltr vel'[203] as well as numerous accounts of him showing restraint

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[199] Ibid. 'You have been sorely treated, my fosterling Sámr, and it is to be expected that it is meant to be so that our deaths will not be far apart.'

[200] The exception to this is his wife, Hallgerðr, with whom he shares a complicated and strenuous relationship; see Section 6.3.2. Nevertheless, in some cases, even she succumbs to his temper; see *Nj*, p. 102.

[201] *Nj*, p. 107. 'I will not do that [...] because then I will have Gunnarr's anger.'

[202] *Nj*, p. 113. 'They were all very taken aback when they saw him enter the room; they all fell silent, but before, there had been much laughter. Gunnarr was very angry [...] "anybody who repeats these words shall be expelled from here and still have my anger." They were so scared of him that no one dared to repeat the words. Then he walked away.'

[203] *Nj*, p. 53. 'Even-tempered.'

and temperance when provoked by his wife Hallgerðr and others.[204] The key element here is the control he has over his reactions. As Hildigunnr Starkaðardóttir remarks: 'Þat mun opt á finnask […] at Gunnarr er seinþreyttr til vandræða, en harðdrœgr, ef hann má eigi undan komask.'[205] It is clearly indicated that Gunnarr does not act in haste and his displays of anger are always portrayed as just: only when his patience, mildness, and temperance have been seriously tried through many provocations by his enemies and he is accused of the effeminizing act of crying, does he draw the line, become severely angry, and avenge by blood.[206] As discussed in Section 7.3.1, a fundamental element in the honourable practice of anger is that retribution is conducted justly and in a controlled manner.[207] As Gunnarr prepares for a slaying in revenge, his anger is unfamiliar to his mother, who has never seen him like this before: 'Reiðuligr ert þú nú, sonr minn, ok ekki sá ek þik slíkan fyrr.'[208] When Gunnarr returns from the successful vengeance, his friend Njáll implies that Gunnarr has been extremely patient in the events leading up to this and that his reactions are excusable: 'hefir þú verit mjǫk at þreyttr.'[209] Njáll describes Gunnarr's anger as justified, as he has been severely tried. In this way, Gunnarr's expression of his anger is in alignment with the emotive script of just royal anger, which serves to align his character with that of nobility.

1.4.3 Gender differences

In *Njáls saga*, particular words are repeatedly tied to the same action, such as where it is noted with a formulaic wording that a male gets angry and subsequently insults someone, or more commonly, strikes a blow:[210]

> Þá reiddisk Hǫskuldr, ok var fátt um með þeim brœðrum nǫkkura hríð. [211]

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[204] See, e.g., *Nj*, pp. 151, 94, 98, 106, 117–18, 121–22, 180. The saga emphasises Gunnarr's tempered and conciliatory character; see *Nj*, pp. 139, 145. See further Chapter 7 of this dissertation on temperance and restraint. By contrast, some of the malicious male characters of the saga are described as not being in control of their anger. See, e.g., about Víga-Kolr, *Nj*, p. 97; Sigmundr, p. 105; Skammkell, p. 120; Atli, p. 95; Svanr, p. 32; sons of Starkðr, p. 146.

[205] *Nj*, p. 149. 'It will often be felt […] that Gunnarr is slow to be aroused to hostilities, but hard-hitting if he cannot avoid them.'

[206] Gunnarr is accused of crying in *Nj*, p. 135.

[207] See Section 1.3.1; Althoff, '*Ira Regis*: Prolegomena to a History of Royal Anger'.

[208] *Nj*, p. 136. 'You look very angry now my son, I have not seen you like this before.'

[209] *Nj*, p. 139. 'You have been severely tried.'

[210] Similar formulaic expressions can be found in *Eg*, pp. 32, 99–100.

> Þá reiddisk Hǫskuldr ok laust sveininn með sprota […] en sprotinn kom í andlitit, ok sprakk fyrir[212]
> Þá reiddisk Þorvaldr ok laust hana í andlitit, svá at blœddi[213]
> Þá reiddisk Glúmr ok hjó til hans með handsaxi[214]
> Gunnarr reiddisk ok mælti: „Illa er þá, ef ek em þjófsnautr", — ok lýstr hana kinnhest.[215]
> Gizurr reiddisk þá mjǫk ok mælti: „Ólíkr ertú þínum fǫður" [216]
> Þorkell spratt þá upp af mikilli reiði og greip sax sitt […] „skal ek reka saxit í gegnum þik" [217]

The formula above is only applied to one woman, Þórhildr *skáldkona*. She catches her husband gazing at a young woman. Her following actions are not a physical slap or a blow, but a verbal one in the form of a couplet:

> […] hon reiðisk ok kveðr til hans kviðling:
> „Era gapriplar góðir,
> gægr er þér í augum,
> Þráinn", segir hon.[218]

The latter element in *gapripill* (*ripill)* can be read as a metaphor for a small penis.[219] This would provide the meaning that Þráinn's 'small gaping penis is dysfunctional', which is certainly a great attack on Þráinn's manhood. By reciting the couplet, Þórhildr retaliates the disgrace her husband showed her with the power that is available to her — the

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[211] *Nj*, p. 7. 'Then Hǫskuldr became angry, and the relationship between the brothers was strained for some time.'
[212] *Nj*, p. 29. 'Then Hǫskuldr became angry and struck the boy […] with a stick, but the stick hit his face and cut through the skin.'
[213] *Nj*, p. 33. 'Then Þorvaldr became angry and hit her in the face so it bled.'
[214] *Nj*, p. 49. 'Then Glúmr became angry and struck at him with a short sword.'
[215] *Nj*, p. 124. 'Gunnarr became angry and said: "It is bad if I am a thief's partner" and slapped her on the cheek.'
[216] *Nj*, p. 371. 'Gizurr then became very angry and said: "You are very unlike your father".'
[217] *Nj*, p. 305. 'Þorkell sprung up with much anger and grabbed his short sword […] "I will thrust this short sword through you".'
[218] *Nj*, p. 89. 'She becomes angry and recites a couplet: "The [or: Your] gaping rods are no good, | lechery is in your eyes, | Þráinn," she says.'
[219] *Ripill* here has the meaning a 'thin rod'; see 'ripill' in *Íslensk orðabók,* ed. by Mörður Árnason. The compound word *Hafalda-ripill* refers to an object used in weaving for the purpose of binding loops (literally 'loop-rod'); see Matthías Þórðarson, 'Ýmislegt um gamla vefstaðinn', p. 17; and *Íslensk orðabók,* ed. by Mörður Árnason. Örnólfur Thorsson explains *ripill* as *staur* (pole); see *Brennu-Njáls saga*, ed. by Örnólfur Thorsson, p. 65. Additional possible meanings are a 'short skirt' or 'long fellow'; see *Nj* p. 89 and 'ripill' in *Íslensk orðabók*. This creates a reference to a rod-shaped tool entering loops, a powerful image from the feminine sphere regarding her husband's dysfunctional sexual abilities.

equivalent of slapping. Her words are such an insult that her husband's reaction is swift, swifter than in any of the other cases where this formula is applied. Þráinn immediately throws Þórhildr out of the house, announces their divorce, and replaces her with the young woman he was gazing at. Þórhildr is severely reprimanded for her display of anger, and the scene not only marks her exit from the house and her marriage but also from the saga. However, while the account of Þórhildr's fate unfolds in the above manner in the saga text, the outcome of the plot on another narrative level is considerably in Þórhildr's favour: With the insult being in verse, it adheres to the tale of the events to Þráinn's shame, and the saga's subsequent portrayal of him is less than favourable.[220]

The case of Þórhildr's anger is one of the few instances in which the feelings of a woman are expressed with an emotion word in *Njáls saga*. That only occurs twenty-four times.[221] Two aspects are most noteworthy about the use of words regarding women's emotions: the gender difference in the use of words connoting anger and the depiction of Hallgerðr Hǫskuldsdóttir's emotions.

1.4.3.1 Words for female anger

Slightly different words are used for the emotions of women and men. Both genders are *blíðr* (tender or affectionate) and *feginn* (joyful), and both men and women *unna* (love). However, some words are only used to describe women's feelings. All of these instances are in matters related to their spouses, as in most of the twenty-four cases. *Dapr* (sad) is reserved for a single person, denoting Unnr Marðardóttir's depressed feelings about her marriage with Hrútr.[222] Hallgerðr is the only person who becomes *beiskr* (embittered).[223] *Skapþungt* (sad, literally: of heavy mind) appears four times, all in cases about women.[224]

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[220] Þráinn is repeatedly portrayed as a flawed and impetuous character, as is thoroughly analysed by Ármann Jakobsson in his 'The Impetuousness of Þráinn Sigfússon'.
[221] See further below, but thirteen of those cases concern Hallgerðr: *allkátr* (p. 32), *ást* (p. 47), *beiskr* (p. 104), *blíða* (p. 33), *djarfliga* (p. 85), *feginn* (p. 183), *geisa* (p. 99), *skapþungt* (pp. 31, 34), *stilla sik* (p. 48), and *unna* (pp. 31, 44, 48). Five instances are about Unnr Marðardóttir: *skapþungt* (p. 22), *dapr* (p. 22), *blíðr* (pp. 25–26), and *vera fátt um með* (p. 22); one about Bergþóra: *geisa* (p. 114). Additionally, the feelings of Gunnarr's mother Rannveig are noted twice: *feginn* (p. 192) and *œði mikil* (p. 194), and once each in the cases of Þórhildr skáldkona: *reiðask* (p. 89); Hildigunnr Starkaðardóttir: *skapþungt* (p. 290), and Gunnarr's aunt, Guðlaug: *unna* (p. 424).
[222] *Nj*, p. 22.
[223] *Nj*, p. 104.
[224] *Nj*: Unnr Marðardóttir (p. 22); Hallgerðr Hǫskuldsdóttir (pp. 31, 34); Hildigunnr Starkaðardóttir (p. 290). The word is mentioned once in four other sagas, *Fljótsdœla saga*, *Hallfreðar saga*

A woman's anger is mentioned four times. Apart from *reiðask* in the above example of Þórhildr *skáldkona*, the verb *geisa* (with the amplifying adverb *mjǫk*) is used twice, and *æði* (with the amplifier *mikil*) is used once:

> Hallgerðr leitaði á Gunnar mjǫk, er hann hafði sætzk á vígit [...] hon geisaði mjǫk.[225]
> [Bergþóra] kom innar í annat sinn ok geisaði mjǫk.[226]
> Rannveig spratt upp af æði mikilli.[227]

Geisa refers to rage, raving, and a rampage: to lose control. It is often used in Old Norse texts to describe warfare, fire, or destructive and wild waters and sea.[228] *Æði* similarly refers to frenzy, fury, and even madness. These words connote a much more unrefined, uncontrolled expression of anger than the royal anger or noble anger that has an outlet in just actions, which is described above in the cases of men. Both *geisa* and *æði* connote a loss of control or extremes: something bursting open with force and fury. This is thus a different kind of anger (or expression of anger) than when the word *reiðask* is used, and it is exclusively used concerning women in *Njáls saga*.

These uncontrolled expressions of women's anger are met with disdain. As noted above, Þórhildr's husband becomes furious, divorces her on the spot, and throws her out of the house. Hallgerðr's expression of anger using the terms *geisaði mjǫk* is dismissed with an ignoring silence by her husband: 'Gunnarr gaf eigi gaum at því.'[229] When Bergþóra *geisaði mjǫk* (raged greatly), her husband Njáll reacts in a similar depreciating way, advising a calm reaction,[230] and her son Skarpheðinn demeans his mother's expression with these words: 'Ekki hǫfu vér kvenna skap [..] at vér reiðimsk við ǫllu.'[231] The negative reaction of the men towards the women's display of anger in these

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vandræðaskálds, *Vápnfirðinga saga,* and *Fóstbrœðra saga*, in each case referring to a woman, except in *Fóstbrœðra saga*. See 'skapþungt' in *Mörkuð íslensk málheild: Fornrit*; and 'skapþungr' in *ONP Registre*.

[225] *Nj*, p. 99. 'Hallgerðr harassed Gunnarr much for having settled the slaying peacefully [...] she raged greatly.'

[226] *Nj*, p. 114. 'Bergþóra came in again and raged greatly.'

[227] *Nj*, p. 194. 'Rannveig jumped up in great rage.'

[228] See examples of 'geisa' in *ONP Registre*.

[229] *Nj*, p. 99. 'Gunnar ignored this'.

[230] *Nj*, p. 114. Njáll recites a proverb; 'kemsk, þó at seint fari, húsfreyja', which essentially means 'one can go slowly but still achieve the goal, mistress'.

[231] *Nj*, p. 114. 'We do not have the temper of women, who become angry over anything.' In all those three cases, the women have attacked or put in question the men's honour. However, this is not the case when Gunnar's mother Rannveig has *æði mikil*, which is not met with disdain.

scenes is intimately connected to the women's provocation by whetting, which is discussed in Section 6.3 on the performance of anger through whetting.[232]

1.4.3.2 Words used about Hallgerðr

As noted above, women's emotions are mentioned twenty-four times in the saga. Thirteen of those cases concern Hallgerðr, which emphasizes her central role in the first part of the saga. In comparison, only Gunnarr's and Flosi Þórðarson's emotions are mentioned more often. The following list shows the number of times for the characters whose feelings are most frequently referred to with emotion words:

29	Gunnarr Hámundarson
17	Flosi Þórðarson
13	Hallgerðr Hǫskuldsdóttir
8	Kári Sǫlmundarson
8	Jarl Hákon
7	Skarpheðinn Njálsson
7	Mǫrðr Valgarðsson
6	Njáll Þorgeirsson

The emotion words used about Gunnarr mostly refer to his anger or courage (twenty-one out of twenty-nine) in various feuds and political situations, with the important and notable exception of when he expresses his regret of being forced to slay people.[233] In contrast, the emotion words used about Hallgerðr are more expressive and nuanced and offer a deeper view into her psyche, underlining her complexity as a character — as opposed to Gunnarr who is portrayed on a narrower emotional spectrum as a somewhat stereotypical idealized saga hero.

Hallgerðr is a proud woman, who is described as tall and beautiful with long, silky hair.[234] She is noted to be 'skaphǫrð'[235] by the narrator and 'blandin mjǫk'[236] by her uncle, which is stated to be a significant defect ('áfátt', 'lǫstr')[237] and bad currency when

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[232] For the treatment of women in *Njáls saga* and female gender roles in the saga, see essays by Helga Kress collected in *Fyrir dyrum fóstru*; Dronke, *The Role of Sexual Themes in Njáls saga*. On how the saga discusses gender roles in relation to masculinity in particular, see Ármann Jakobsson, 'Masculinity and Politics in *Njáls saga*'.
[233] See above in Section 1.4.1 and *Nj*, p. 139.
[234] *Nj*, pp. 6, 29.
[235] *Nj*, p. 29. 'Of harsh temper.'
[236] *Nj*, p. 86. 'Of mixed temperament.'
[237] *Nj*, pp. 42, 87. 'Defective', 'vice'.

negotiations of her marriages are conducted.[238] *Blandin mjǫk* insinuates insidiousness and a duplicitous nature, alluding to her many sides that are portrayed in the saga.[239] Hallgerðr's character is unruly and provocative and is representative of a complex strong female figure who disturbs the patriarchal hierarchy within the saga, and also receives the blame for quite a few misfortunes that unfold in the narrative.[240]

However, it is possible to discern a slightly more tender portrayal of her emotions before her marriage to Gunnarr than after she marries him. The first time Hallgerðr's feelings are noted is when her father betroths her to her first husband without asking for her consent. She sadly conveys to her father that '[n]ú em ek at raun komin um þat, er mik hefir lengi grunat, at þú mundir eigi unna mér svá mikit sem þú sagðir jafnan',[241] and the narrator further notes that this makes her 'skapþungt'.[242] However, she is already plotting to get rid of Þorvaldr, the husband, and perhaps because of that, she is 'allkát'[243] at their wedding and deceptively shows 'blíðu'[244] towards Þorvaldr. Soon after, Þorvaldr slaps her and again she becomes 'skapþungt'[245] and has him killed. Glúmr Óleifsson is her next husband, whom she loves very much, as she says herself: 'Vel er um ástir okkrar'.[246] Their interaction even includes a description of her hugging him, a rare gesture to be noted in the sagas.[247] When Glúmr slaps her, the description of her feelings is unusually rich: 'Hon unni honum mikit ok mátti eigi stilla sik ok grét hástǫfum'.[248] Here, it is both noted how much she loved Glúmr and that her emotions are

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[238] *Nj*, pp. 42, 86–87. See further on Hallgerðr in Section 6.3.2.
[239] Zoe Borovsky explores the connotations of *blandin* in Old Norse myths and suggests that, in Hallgerðr's case, it is to be taken as a reference to paganism and the old value system, along with allusions to otherness, 'a "giant" past that disrupts' the peaceful order. See Borovsky, 'Women and Insults', pp. 10–11.
[240] On Hallgerðr's figure, see, e.g., Heinrichs, 'Hallgerðrs Saga in der Njála: Der doppelte Blick'; Helga Kress, '"Fá mér leppa tvo": Nokkur orð um Hallgerði og hárið'. On misogyny in *Njáls saga*, see Helga Kress, 'Ekki höfum vér kvennaskap'.
[241] *Nj*, p. 31. 'Now I know what I have long suspected, that you do not love me as much as you have often said.'
[242] *Nj*, p. 31. 'Sad', literally: 'of heavy mind.'
[243] *Nj*, p. 32. 'Very cheerful.'
[244] *Nj*, p. 33. 'Tenderness.'
[245] *Nj*, p. 34.
[246] *Nj*, p. 47. 'The love between us is good.'
[247] *Nj*, p. 47. See examples from the corpus of embracing in Wolf, 'Body Language in Medieval Iceland', pp. 110–11.
[248] *Nj*, p. 48. 'She loved him much and could not control herself and cried loudly.'

unrestrained, as in the case of the anger of Bergþóra, Þórhildr, and Rannveig. Another exceptional word is used when she meets Gunnarr for the first time, and it is noted how 'djarfliga'[249] she speaks to him in their courting scene. This seems to be the only example in the whole corpus of *Íslendingasǫgur* where this word is used about a woman.[250] However, at this point in the saga, the descriptions of her tender heavy mood or feelings of affection end, and words that depict her as more emotionally strained and angry begin to be used.

After having married Gunnarr, she is often cross at him for not reacting to Bergþóra's insults towards her. The insults make her 'beisk'[251] and once she 'geisaði mjǫk'[252] towards Gunnarr, which, as described above, insinuates uncontrolled anger. There are frequent efforts to tame and discipline her: 'Ver þú dæl, meðan ek em heiman, ok sýn af þér enga fárskapi, þar sem við vini mína er um at eiga' Gunnarr warns her.[253] 'Trǫll hafi þína vini',[254] she replies. Gunnarr later slaps Hallgerðr for thievery, to which she answers coldly that she will remember that slap and repay it.[255] When Gunnarr decides to stay in Iceland at the risk of being killed with impunity, she becomes 'fegin'[256] and it is left ambiguous in the text whether she is joyful out of pride that her husband does not yield to his enemies or because she knows this most likely signals his death.

Thus, though Hallgerðr's feelings are mentioned much less frequently with emotion words than Gunnarr's feelings are, the words that are used provide the reader with a wider and more intense range of emotions — from intimate love to fierce contempt, from heavy heart to cheerfulness and great rage — which produces more insight into her psychology than most other characters. This also demonstrates how specifically the emotive vocabulary of the saga is applied; the selection of words is customized for each occasion and character.

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[249] *Nj*, p. 85. 'Daringly/boldly.'
[250] According to a search for 'djarfliga' in the database *Mörkuð íslensk málheild: Fornrit*.
[251] *Nj*, p. 104. 'Embittered/acrimonious.'
[252] *Nj*, p. 99. 'Raged greatly.'
[253] *Nj*, p. 92. 'Be compliant while I am away, and do not exercise any malevolence where my friends are concerned.'
[254] *Nj*, p. 92. 'May trolls have your friends.'
[255] *Nj*, p. 124.
[256] *Nj*, p. 183. 'Joyful.'

1.5 Conclusion

This chapter described the development and construction of the first lexicons of emotion words in *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga*. The lexicons were presented and analysed. It was confirmed that both sagas have a vocabulary for a large spectrum of emotions. These are divided into many categories, each including a range of expressions. Furthermore, it was established how the lexicons can be used as a tool for uncovering narrative patterns, literary constructions of gender and status, and formulas for character development. The analysis reveals that the two works apply their emotional vocabulary in somewhat different settings and scenes, and different categories are prominent.

Egils saga has a slightly larger vocabulary of emotion words. It also has numerous instances of communicating anger, joy, and love in the context of royal anger, which resonates with the fact that aspects of the saga bear a resemblance to the genre of *konungasögur*.[257] The fact that the biggest emotion categories in the saga are JOY and LOVE can be explained by this feature, and this does not indicate that these are prominent emotional themes in the saga as a whole. This underlines how individual scenes or a particular formula skews the overall picture that the lexicon reveals, and advises that no assumptions about the general themes in these sagas can be made based only on a list or a word count. Furthermore, the results show that *Egils saga* fits the general assumption of self-expression and the narrative voice in *Íslendingasǫgur*, in the sense that the majority of the emotion words in *Egils saga* are spoken by the narrator, but if the word is spoken by a character about his or her own emotions, it is most often in poetry where a more internal perspective can be found.

Njáls saga, on the other hand, has more characters expressing themselves directly regarding their own inner state. Clear gender differences exist in the application of specific words, where some words are only used about women, such as *skapþungt* (of heavy mind), *geisa* (rage), and *æði mikil* (great rage). Few cases of this exist, but they nevertheless show that women's anger is termed differently and has different characteristics than men's anger; the connotation of the words is that female anger is less controlled and wilder and calls for reactions of disdain.

It is notable that each of the two sagas has a rather different set of emotion words. When the two lexicons are taken together, they include 164 individual words.

[257] See Section 1.3.1.

Only thirty-six of them are found in both sagas. The analysis further reveals that only a minority of the words (35% in *Njáls saga* and 24% in *Egils saga*) are used more than once or twice. In many cases, these words form a part of a narrative formula, where similar or the same wording is applied in a similar setting throughout the work. This is the case of anger words in the context of royal anger, of rejoicing at the return of someone with the words *feginn* and *feginsamliga,* and the case of describing being in an intimate relationship with a king with the word *kærleikr*. The majority of the words (65% in *Njáls saga* and 76% in *Egils saga*) are only used once or twice and are thus applied in specific, precise settings.

When the above is considered, the emotional vocabulary of *Egils saga* and *Njáls saga* is indeed diverse and varied and contains terms for a broad spectrum of emotions. It has been shown here how emotion words are applied in a customized and selected way to describe the emotions of the poet Egill and of Ásgerðr, Hallgerðr, Bergþóra, Gunnarr, and Njáll as well as other characters, and each choice of words emphasizes the specific features of the characters and their function and place within the narrative. Furthermore, I have addressed how the specificity of the application of the words underlines ideas of femininity, masculinity, status, and honour. The fact that most of the words are used for a particular purpose demonstrates that emotion words are applied in the saga in a systematic and precise way. The variety of nuances within the same emotion category further demonstrates the breadth of the emotive vocabulary. These findings do not altogether agree with previous views that maintain that the emotive vocabulary of the sagas is poor and not very nuanced and that the use of emotion words in them is infrequent and limited.[258]

In the absence of a similar study on other literary works, either medieval or modern, it is difficult to estimate whether the frequency of emotion words in *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga* should be considered high or low compared to other works. In *Egils saga*, 3.1% of the lexemes are emotion words, which is slightly more than in *Njáls saga*, where 2.5% of the lexemes are emotion words. The sagas are also somewhat similar in how often emotion words are applied. The total word count of emotion words in *Njáls saga* is

[258] See the discussion at the beginning of this chapter, and for this view Miller, 'Emotions and the Sagas', p. 107; Vésteinn Ólason, 'Emosjon og aksjon', p. 164; Wolf, 'Somatic Semiotics', p. 143; Sif Rikhardsdottir, *Emotions in Old Norse Literature*, p. 71.

0.25% of the total word count in the saga. In *Egils saga*, the proportion of emotion words is slightly higher at 0.31% of all the words of the saga.

A brief examination of the short *Víglundar saga* can provide at least one indicative point of comparison. *Víglundar saga* is a love story that is categorized as an *Íslendingasaga* but has strong stylistic features associated with romances.[259] The saga includes twenty-two stanzas and is classified as a late saga, argued to be composed in the early fifteenth century.[260] The Svart á hvítu edition of *Víglundar saga*, which is available in a digital form, is included in the database *Mörkuð íslensk málheild* and includes 12,585 words.[261] Ninety-four occurrences of emotion words can listed from the saga by the same method and criteria as described above (Section 1.2). Thus, 0.74% of the words in the saga are emotion words, which is a greater ratio than in *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga*.

The strong stylistic romance features of the saga manifest for example in the following passage, which includes expressions in a style that would be unthinkable in *Egils saga* and *Njáls saga*:

> En þau unnust því heitara með leyniligri ást ok fólginni elsku þeim í brjósti þegar í fyrstu, er þau váru uppvaxandi, svá at rætr elskunnar ok uppvöxtr ástarinnar, er aldri varð upprættr ór þeira hjörtum, eptir því sem náttúra er amorsins, at eldr yndisins ok logi elskunnar brennr því heitara ok sækir því meir brjóst ok hjörtu mannanna saman sem fleiri vilja þeim meina […] því at þau unnust alla æfi svá heitt, meðan þau lifðu bæði, at hvárki mátti af öðru sjá.[262]

This passage includes long strings of emotion words where the amorous feelings of Víglundr and Ketilríðr are analysed, explained, and pondered adding references to heat and fire. It is hardly a surprise that almost half (forty) of the occurrences of emotion

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[259] On the saga's textual and stylistic relations to *riddarasögur* and *fornaldarsögur,* see Vésteinn Ólason, 'Íslendingasögur og þættir', pp. 157–58; Jóhannes Halldórsson, 'Formáli', p. xxxi.
[260] Vésteinn Ólason, 'Family Sagas', p. 115. Oldest manuscript (not complete) dates to *c*. 1500, AM 551a, 4to.
[261] *Víglundar saga*, ed. by Jón Torfason and others. The Íslenzk fornrit edition is *Víglundar saga*, ed. by Jóhannes Halldórsson.
[262] *Víglundar saga*, ed. by Jóhannes Halldórsson, p. 82. 'But they loved each other even more with secret affection and love that was hidden in their bosom, from the time when they were growing up, so that the roots of affection and the growth of love could never be uprooted from their hearts, because such is the nature of amor, that the fire of pleasure and the flame of love burns hotter, and more strongly besets the breasts and hearts of men, as more people try to forbid it […] for they loved each other so warmly their whole life, while they both lived, that they could not bear to be without each other.'

words in *Víglundar saga* denote love or affection. However, almost all the emotion words in this passage from *Víglundar saga* are also found in *Njáls saga*.[263] The difference between the two sagas' depiction of emotions consists in how these words are used, rather than the vocabulary. Each time amorous feelings between a man and woman are communicated through words in *Njáls saga*, only one or two emotion words are applied:

> [Hallgerðr] unni [Glúmi] mikit ok mátti eigi stilla sik ok grét hástǫfum[264]
> Þráinn unni [Þórhildi] lítit.[265]
> Vel er um ástir okkrar.[266]
> Gunnarr lagði hug á Bergljótu, frændkonu jarls[267]

Here, the articulation is blunt and not dwelt on through words with emotive content. Perhaps it is primarily in this sense that the claims that the readers of sagas are 'seldom assisted by native emotion words',[268] can be justified. Emotive scenes in both *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga* certainly do contain emotion words, but they do not form a part of a string of such words when they appear, nor is emotive language used to elaborate on the emotions. Rather, the words appear few at a time and are applied in a specific, concise way. Moreover, the connotations and placements of the words in the text are loaded with meaning that should not be overlooked as inconsequential in the literary interpretation of the sagas. Furthermore, as will be examined in the remaining chapters of this dissertation, the emotive intensity of individual scenes should be read in context with the actions and gestures that appear, as well as bodily metaphors, to which I turn to next.

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[263] *Elska* (n.) appears only in the form of a verb in *Nj* (*elskr*). *Amor* does not occur in any *Íslendingasaga* but *Víglundar saga*. However, *amor* and compound words appear in a handful of Old Norse romances (see 'amor' in *ONP registre*) which further testifies to the stylistic resemblance of *Víglundar saga* and romances.
[264] *Nj*, p. 48. 'Hallgerðr loved Glúmr much and could not contain herself and cried loudly.'
[265] *Nj*, p. 87. 'Þráinn loved Þórhildr little.'
[266] *Nj*, p. 47. 'The love between us is good.'
[267] *Nj*, p. 83. 'Gunnarr desired Bergljót, kinswoman of the jarl.'
[268] Miller, 'Emotions and the Sagas', p. 107.

2 THE EMOTIONAL BODY

When Egill's most promising son, Þǫðvarr, whom he loved dearly, drowns, not a word is said about Egill's inner state. His feelings must be inferred by his action and his bodily expressions. When Egill receives the news, he hastily goes to find Þǫðvarr's body, lays it in his lap, and rides to his father's grave mound. While putting the body into the grave, Egill's deep grief is communicated physically: 'þat er sǫgn manna, at hann þrútnaði svá, at kyrtillinn rifnaði af honum ok svá hosurnar.'[1]

Egill's feelings are portrayed as swelling so forcefully and intensely that they press outwards as if they were threatening to burst through. In *Njáls saga*, the physicality of the feelings of Þórhallr Ásgrímsson is even more extreme when he receives the news that his foster father Njáll has been burnt to death: 'hann þrútnaði allr ok blóðbogi stóð ór hvárritveggju hlustinni, ok varð eigi stǫðvat, ok fell hann í óvit, ok þá stǫðvaðisk.'[2]
The emotions of Egill and Þórhallr in these scenes are so forceful that the build-up of outward pressure dilates their bodies and, in Þórhallr's case, gushes out of it with force. This imagery can be found in several other emotional scenes in Old Norse works. In the legendary saga *Völsunga saga*, Sigurðr Fáfnisbani swells with grief so that his armour

[1] *Eg*, p. 244. 'People say that he swelled so much that his tunic tore off him, and his hose.'
[2] *Nj*, p. 344. 'His whole body swelled up, and blood-bows spurted out of both his ears and this could not be stopped; he fainted, and then it stopped.'

bursts: 'svá þrútnuðu hans síður, at í sundr gengu brynjuhringar.'[3] In *Laxdœla saga*, Bolli Bollason is described as 'þrútinn […] af trega'[4] and Hrefna Ásgeirsdóttir bursts with grief.[5] The eddic elegy *Guðrúnarkviða* I further provides an excellent example of emotions thrusting their way outwards like a pressurized capsuled force. The elegy is argued to be contemporary to *Njáls saga*, though its dating is nevertheless uncertain.[6] It can be viewed, in Lönnroth's words, as 'neither or both' young and old, combining Old Germanic style and later foreign influences.[7] In the poem, the heroine Guðrún Gjúkadóttir is about to burst from grief and prepares to die because she cannot release her swelling feelings of sorrow after the slaying of her husband Sigurðr *Fáfnisbani*:

> þeygi Guðrún
> gráta mátti,
> svá var hún móðug,
> myndi hon springa.[8]

Attempts by others to induce Guðrún's weeping to save her life turn out to be in vain. Their last resort is to get her to embrace the dead body of Sigurðr:

> Þá hné Guðrún
> hǫll við bólstri,
> haddr losnaði,
> hlýr roðnaði,
> en regns dropi
> rann niðr um kné.[9]

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[3] *Völsunga saga*, p. 187. 'His sides swelled so much that the rings of his armour burst asunder.' See also the accompanying stanza.
[4] *Laxdœla saga*, p. 187. 'Swollen […] with sorrow.'
[5] Ibid., p. 158.
[6] For a recent review of scholarship on dating eddic poetry, see Thorvaldsen, 'The Dating of Eddic Poetry'. On the dating of eddic elegies specifically, see Sävborg, 'Elegy in Eddic Poetry'.
[7] Lönnroth, 'Heroine in Grief', p. 125. Sävborg stresses the pre-Christian Old Germanic background of the eddic elegies in a recent essay, 'Elegy in Eddic Poetry'. Vésteinn Ólason maintains that *Guðrúnarkviða* I bears no marks of being much older than its writing time (*c*. 1270) in his 'Formáli', p. 79. He argues that the focus on inner feelings is a result of the influx of courtly literature in 'Heusler and the Dating of Eddic Poetry', pp. 186–87.
[8] *Eddukvæði*, p. 329. 'Guðrún could not cry, she was so sorrowful, that she was about to burst.'
[9] *Eddukvæði*, p. 331. 'Then Guðrún collapsed, leaned on the pillow, her hair loosened, her cheek reddened, but a drop of rain [TEARS] ran down to her knees.'

The imagery in the poem becomes delicately soft in this verse. The release of Guðrún's emotions are depicted by her hair coming loose and her cheek blushing as her tears run down to her lap. In comparison, we can observe the sad fate of Besse in *Saga Óláfs konungs hins helga*, who becomes as red as blood in appearance and swells up with grief when he hears that King Óláfr *helgi* has died but is unfortunately unable to release his sorrow through tears:

> suo er sagt at Besse þrutnade ok gerde dreyr raudan yferlitz ok gat ecki gratit hann gek aftr j borgina til Petrs kirkiu ok sprak þar af helstride þui er hann hafde efter fall hins hæilaga Olafs konungs.[10]

To gain a deeper understanding of these powerful bodily metaphors for emotions, it is worth probing the intellectual environment in thirteenth-century Iceland and the prevalent conceptualizations of the physiology of feelings, which most likely represent a thought system that is rather removed from that of the modern reader. *Íslendingasǫgur* were mainly written in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and were produced by a literary elite, people who were learned and presumably of high status in society, such as wealthy landowners or clerics.[11] Many studies have demonstrated how various aspects of Latin literature and learning, which were brought to Iceland from the eleventh century onwards to an increasing degree, had manifold effects on Old Norse literature.[12] As Annette Lassen concludes, the Latin tradition 'lies in the background of the entire Icelandic saga corpus'.[13] However, the sagas are the creative result of the interaction between native and non-native literary traditions and knowledge systems. Concerning

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[10] *Saga Óláfs konungs hins helga*, vol.2, p. 830. 'It is said that Besse swelled and became red as blood in appearance and could not cry. He walked back into the city to Peter's church and burst there from the death throes he had by the fall of the holy King Óláf.' Text from GKS 1005 fol. (Flateyjarbók) *c*. 1387–1395, representing a version estimated to have been composed *c*. 1225; see Heinrichs, 'Óláfs saga helga', pp. 447–48.

[11] Clover, 'Icelandic Family Sagas (Íslendingasögur)', pp. 268–71; Guðrún Nordal, *Tools of Literacy*, p. 9; Lönnroth, 'Sponsors, Writers, and Readers of Early Norse Literature'.

[12] The scholarly literature on Latin influences on Old Norse literature is vast. For a good research overview, see Lassen, 'Indigenous and Latin Literature'; Wellendorf, 'Lærdomslitteratur'. For *Njáls saga*, see, e.g., Lönnroth, *Njáls Saga: A Critical Introduction*; Hermann Pálsson, *Uppruni Njálu og hugmyndir*. For *Egils saga*, see Torfi H. Tulinius, *Skáldið í skriftinni*. For the learned background of thirteenth-century skalds, see Guðrún Nordal, *Tools of Literacy*.

[13] Lassen, 'Indigenous and Latin Literature', p. 82.

the topic of emotions and the body, it is this interaction that becomes the focus of the current section.

While the authors of the sagas were presumably men with a learned background, their audience is thought to have been more socially mixed.[14] This prompts the question of whether the audience was expected to recognize learned references in the sagas and the literary constructions of emotions based on them. For instance, for the purpose of her own study, Sif Rikhardsdottir argues for an approach that distinguishes between 'literary' and 'scholarly' Old Norse texts regarding emotional depiction. She contends that, while 'theorising of the passions […] is likely to have influenced learned rhetoric on emotions […], it is unclear to what extent such scholarly theoretical framework of emotions would have impacted and shaped literary representation of emotional behaviour'.[15] She points out that one cannot 'assume that authors would have expected [the relevant audience groups] to be aware of [these conventions]'.[16] Sif suggests that 'scholarly background may thus have informed the presumptions and discourses regarding the psychosomatic system of emotions, but literary depiction of emotional behaviour would most probably have drawn on common observed patterns of emotional comportment'.[17]

In this thesis, I assume a different standpoint, where the Latin tradition is viewed as having the potential of informing the reading of the physical emotional expression in the sagas. Even if one approaches the sagas as Sif does — as having a different aim as literary creations than scholarly and ecclesiastical or hagiographical texts — the fact that the authors of sagas have artistically applied Latin knowledge systems and imagery derived from non-religious and religious texts of the Latin tradition has been demonstrated in numerous studies.[18] While the sagas are certainly not scholarly

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[14] On social circumstances in medieval Iceland and the presumed audience of the sagas in households, see, e.g., Clover, 'Icelandic Family Sagas (Íslendingasögur)', pp. 270–71.
[15] Sif Rikhardsdottir, *Emotions in Old Norse Literature*, p. 5.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid., p. 6.
[18] Most recently, Siân Grønlie in *Saint and the Saga Hero*. Torfi H. Tulinius explores the use of Christian imagery in *Egils saga*'s narratology and depiction of feelings in *Skáldið í skriftinni*. On the relationship between scenes in *Njáls saga* and theological texts on anger, see Hermann Pálsson, *Uppruni Njálu og hugmyndir*, pp. 49–52. See also Haki Antonsson, 'Observations on Martyrdom'. On Christian rhetoric used in the emotional expression of Njáll, see Vésteinn Ólason, *Dialogues*, p. 114. Iconography in the depiction of emotions in *Heiðarvíga saga* is explored

works, these studies illustrate how these authors artistically applied their learned knowledge in their literary texts and in this way were not inhibited by the possible lack of a learned background among the audience. For instance, in an extensive recent study, Siân Grønlie demonstrates how saga authors apply the literary methods of hagiography in depicting aspects of the psychology and emotions of their characters through imagery of the body, textual references, martyrdom, miracles, and saintly deaths and that various textual relations and borrowings from the learned material of Latin Christendom are manifested in the saga texts.[19] Additionally, it needs to be borne in mind that the boundaries between Old Norse genres (a modern construction) are more fluid than the separation between them would suggest.[20]

The position taken in this thesis is that, while the sagas have genre-specific characteristics, they do not form a closed literary system. The view applied here is that the sagas operate in interaction with other texts and that this 'intertextuality is both "manifest" and "latent"', as Pernille Hermann points out.[21]

In this chapter, I first sketch the relevant historical background in Europe and Iceland and describe the outlines of the physiology of emotions in the medieval Latin West. Second, I devote considerable space to the investigation of the material evidence for this knowledge system in Old Norse manuscripts from the time of writing of the sagas, which spans manuscripts of law, hagiography, history, theological writings, learned treatises, encyclopaedias, and medical books. This is foundational because no study yet exists of Old Norse manuscript evidence for the manifestation of Latin ideas on body and emotions in the medieval North. In the chapters that follow (Chapters 3, 4, and 5), I explore the literary depiction of emotions through the body in *Egils saga* and *Njáls saga* and how imagery derived from Latin knowledge systems can be considered to have been appropriated in the depiction of feelings in the sagas in interaction with vernacular

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in Hill, 'The Red Faced Saint'. As for non-religious Latin texts, the learned background of *Fóstbræðra saga*'s physiological depiction of feelings is explored in Jónas Kristjánsson, *Um Fóstbræðrasögu*, pp. 240–47, 272–74. On learned influences on characters and depictions of feelings in *Fóstbræðra saga* and *Njáls saga*, see Lönnroth, *Njáls Saga: A Critical Introduction*, pp. 107–13.

[19] Grønlie, *Saint and the Saga Hero*, pp. 70–93 (on *Egils saga*), pp. 134–49 (on *Njáls saga*).

[20] For a recent discussion on the problems of genre in Old Norse texts, see Bampi, 'Genre'. Building on Bampi's work on romances, Grønlie analyses the sagas and saints' lives in terms of polysystem theory, where these two genres are seen as engaging with each other in a continuous interaction; see Grønlie, *Saint and the Saga Hero*, pp. 32–36.

[21] Hermann, 'Saga Literature, Cultural Memory, and Storage', pp. 333, 337.

knowledge systems and traditions. Specifically, I explore melancholy in *Egils saga* (Chapter 3), consider hydraulic bodily metaphors of emotion in *Njáls saga* (Chapter 4), and lastly, examine the bodily conceptualization of emotions in the kennings of skaldic poetry in the two sagas (Chapter 5).

2.1 Europe: Historical background and intellectual environment

The time of writing of *Íslendingasǫgur* partly overlaps and immediately succeeds a period of intense cultural activity and monumental change in European society and culture.[22] These transformations broadly took place from *c.* 1050 to 1250, in addition to periods of the changes fading in before and fading out afterwards.[23] Swanson and others have applied the term 'the long twelfth century' for this transformative period, which will be used here.[24] This was a time of large-scale transformation in Europe: vigorous economic and population growth, the development of towns and cities, the emergence of new institutions and structures for learning, church reformation, and the rise of the international orders of the Roman Catholic Church.

One of many catalysts of these developments was the extensive Latin translations of Greek philosophy and science with Arabic additions at the beginning of this period. A notable figure of the translation movement was Constantine the African (*c.* 1020–1087 CE), a monk at the monastery of Monte Cassino in southern Italy near the medical school of Salerno, which soon became one of the most important sources of medical knowledge in Europe. These and other subsequent translations of Arabic and Greek medical and philosophical works into Latin introduced a renewed medical corpus to the Latin West, and the spread of this knowledge created a flow of ideas into Europe that

[22] Fundamental studies on the transformation of Europe in this period are Moore, *First European Revolution*; Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*; Swanson, *Twelfth-Century Renaissance*; *European Transformations*, ed. by Noble and Van Engen. All these respond to some extent to the pioneering work on the period by Charles Haskins in 1927, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*.
[23] On the demarcation of the period, see Swanson, *Twelfth-Century Renaissance*, pp. 212–13; Arnason, 'Parallels and Divergences', p. 18; Moore, *First European Revolution*, p. 3.
[24] Swanson, *Twelfth-Century Renaissance*, pp. viii, 207–08; Noble, 'Introduction', pp. 4–5. Within this period of transformation lies what has been labelled the 'twelfth-century renaissance', a term referring mainly to the cultural innovations in the areas of intellectual thought and learning, science, philosophy, and theology. The word 'renaissance' has proved increasingly problematic when referring to these transformations. For a discussion of the (un)usefulness of the term, see Melve, 'The Revolt of the Medievalists', pp. 248–50; Ladner, 'Terms and Ideas', pp. 28–29.

had a decisive influence on the development of European intellectual thought and science in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[25]

2.1.1 The physiology of emotions in the Medieval West

The medieval European physiological theory of the emotions concentrated on the Galenic ideas of the humours and the four temperaments, where emotions were explained in terms of the four complexions and temperaments that accompanied each humour. According to the ancient theory deriving from the Greek physicians Hippocrates (*c.* 460–370 BCE) and Galen (129–*c.* 200 CE), an imbalance between the four humours of the body (blood, red or yellow bile, black bile, and phlegm) was thought to cause ill health. A proper balance could be restored by regulating the humours. This was done through methods such as the intake of medicaments and particular foods and by purposefully excreting ill humours through bloodletting, cauterization, vomiting, sweating, sexual intercourse, and bathing, to name a few methods.[26] In late antiquity, each humour came to be associated with character types and dispositions, different periods of life, the four elements, and the four seasons.[27] Consequently, as stated in an Old Norse learned treatise on the humours, which is representative of similar treatises circulating in medieval Europe (see Section 2.2.2), one who has too much phlegm in his or her body was 'af kalldri natturu. ok vátri. vstǫðugr. vakr ok udiarfr'.[28] Thus, certain temperaments and complexions made one predisposed to certain feelings, and bad complexions could cause extreme emotions and mental illnesses.

How this works is explained in more detail in, for example, the *Pantegni*, Constantine's widespread and authoritative translation of parts of the medical

[25] On the translation movement, see Grant 'Translations'; Swanson, *Twelfth-Century Renaissance*, pp. 50–54. Burnett's essay, 'Translation and Transmission', is excellent on the translations of works of science.

[26] This account is summarised from Boquet and Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, pp. 132–43; Cohen-Hanegbi, 'A Moving Soul', pp. 48–66; Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, pp. 212–17.

[27] Literature on the theory of the four humours and its influence and development in the Middle Ages is ubiquitous. A fine account is provided by Jacquart and Thomasset in *Sexuality and Medicine in the Middle Ages*; Siraisi, *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine*; Klibansky, Panofsky, and Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy*.

[28] *Hauksbók*, p. 181. 'Of cold and wet nature, unstable, alert and un-daring.'

encyclopaedia of ʻAlī ibn al-ʻAbbās al-Maǧūsī (Haly Abbas).[29] The work contains, among many other things, various writings on the emotions based on the teachings of Galen and Hippocrates, expanded with Arabic additions and adaptations. These are similar to later influential works from the twelfth century, such as Avicenna's *Canon of Medicine*.[30] In the *Pantegni*, the physicality of the emotions is conceptualized as the movement of vital spirits in the blood, originating in the heart and flowing throughout the whole body.[31]

Blood is considered one of the four humours and a carrier of them all. The arousal of movement comes from external stimuli through the soul, which causes 'somatic modifications (pallor or blushing as the blood ebbed and flowed, changes in the heart rate, warming or cooling according to the displacement of the humours, etc.)'.[32] Depending on the emotion, the movement is either from the heart to the limbs (centrifugal) or from the limbs towards the heart (centripetal). Thus, anger and joy cause blood and heat to move to the limbs, causing reddening, while fear and anxiety move the heat and blood towards the heart, resulting in paleness. Additionally, the movements can be either slow or fast. This was often presented in medical and theological texts in a schema:[33]

	CENTRIFUGAL	CENTRIPETAL
SLOW	JOY	ANXIETY/DISTRESS
QUICK	ANGER	FEAR

[29] This work is only available in Renaissance print; see Constantine the African, *Pantegni*. An account of Constantine's translations and essays on the *Pantegni* is published in *The Pantegni and Related Texts,* ed. by Burnett and Jacquart. For an overview of other Latin translations in the long twelfth century transmitting similar medical knowledge, see Knuuttila, 'Emotion', pp. 432–33.
[30] The explication from the *Pantegni* is summarised in Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, pp. 212–16. See Constantine the African, *Pantegni*, Theoretica IV.7–VI.109 (fols. 16v–25v); also quoted in Boquet and Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, pp. 136–38. The same conceptualisations as described here were also presented and expanded in the influential Avicenna's *Canon of Medicine* and Razes' *Liber ad Almansorem* in the latter half of the twelfth century, and these main outlines persisted as the foundation of the conceptualisation of emotions and the body through the Middle Ages. See Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, p. 215; Boquet and Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, p. 137.
[31] 'Vital spirits' are the breath of life, a life force, produced in the heart and distributed through the veins with the blood. Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, p. 213.
[32] Boquet and Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, p. 136.
[33] Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, p. 216.

Complex emotions, such as shame, can arouse movement both towards and away from the heart, as it first involves fear and then defence.[34] Furthermore, a sudden forceful and extreme emotion can possibly cause fainting or death. For example, excessive fear can cause vital spirits to violently rush towards the heart with a lethal outcome.[35]

This physiological conceptualization of emotions means that, just like physical illnesses, extreme 'dispositional emotions which are caused partially by the malfunction of the systems of humours and spirits' could be cured or prevented by the intake of medicine or treatments, such as purging, bloodletting, and certain foods that influence the humours.[36] Foodstuffs and lifestyle were thus 'perceived to influence bodily complexion and through that to alter cognitive and mental states'.[37] Manifold regimens for healthy living and hygiene circulated in medieval Europe based on this conception of the body,[38] such as the popular Latin poem, *Regimen sanitatis Salernitanum* (see Section 2.2.2.3), representing this system whose outlines persisted as the foundation for the physical conceptualization of emotions in the Latin West through the Middle Ages.

2.1.2 Theological and medical synthesis of emotion

In the twelfth century, many of the most important works of philosophy were translated, and by the end of it, the majority of Aristotle's work was available in Latin.[39] The translated texts stimulated advances and developments in philosophy and theology, along with vigorous debates on the reconciliation of the Christian faith with the new knowledge and thinking. This resulted in extensive developments in theology, where the medical understanding of the body and emotions described above was synthesized with reflections on the soul, sin, virtue, and reason,[40] for example in discussions on whether the first arousal of desire and anger felt in the body was in itself sinful or only the

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[34] Ibid., p. 215 n117.
[35] Ibid., p. 214 n13.
[36] Ibid., p. 214.
[37] Cohen-Hanegbi, 'A Moving Soul', p. 54.
[38] See Boquet and Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, pp. 138–40.
[39] See Dod, 'Aristoteles Latinus', p. 50.
[40] A summarised account of how medical theories were synthesised with philosophical theories on emotions in the Middle Ages can be found in Cohen-Hanegbi, 'A Moving Soul'. The scholarship on the subject is vast. Principal works include Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*; Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions*; Boquet and Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities* and Rosenwein, *Generations of Feeling*.

resulting action if one failed to intervene through reason to prevent sinful behaviour triggered by the emotion.[41] The theories of the four temperaments were discussed by thinkers and theologists, such as Adelard of Bath, William of Conches, William of Saint Thierry, Bernard of Clairvaux, Peter Alfonsi, and Hugo de Folieto, as Simo Knuuttila traces in detail.[42] This essentially meant that the bodily conceptualization of emotions described above was embedded in the thought system and ideology of Latin Christendom and became synthesized in 'the Western Christian vision or conception of the human being'.[43] As an effect of this, the most 'detailed twelfth-century Latin treatments of the emotions are found in theological and spiritual treatises'.[44]

It is imperative to note that the humoral doctrine was not confined to being a biological theory limited to scholarly discussions within natural philosophy or medicine but also formed a part of the wider medieval European 'reflection on man'.[45] During the course of the Middle Ages, this doctrine became a fundamental component in an elaborate semiotic system through which it penetrated various sectors and is discernible in texts of various natures and genres as an underlying schema. The four-fold constitution of the humoral theory was embedded in the interconnected conceptions of the ages of man, the four elements, the colours, the tastes, the organs of the body, the seasons, the planets, the zodiac, the winds, the four temperaments, and the accompanying emotions. Thus, it formed a part of a thought system that represented a certain view on the nature of humans and their place in the world, as will be discussed with relation to Old Norse texts in Section 2.2.2.

This view of human beings was embedded into the medieval Christian worldview and was reinforced during the spread of Latin Christendom, as the inclination 'to interpret the temperaments theologically grew', which further fuelled the revival and expansion of the doctrine of the four humours.[46] This conceptualization of emotions and the body is thus not limited to technical elaborations in specialized texts but can also be

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[41] Ibid., pp. 54–55; Boquet and Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, pp. 138–40.
[42] Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, pp. 177–255.
[43] Boquet and Nagy, 'Medieval Sciences of Emotions', p. 25. See also Boquet and Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, pp. 130–57.
[44] Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, p. 177.
[45] Boquet and Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, p. 132.
[46] Klibansky, Panofsky, and Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy*, p. 106. This development is traced in some detail in ibid., pp. 102–11; Boquet and Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, pp. 130–57.

discerned as an omnipresent, sometimes latent, conception of the body. For example, this can be seen in medieval artwork[47] and church decorations[48] as well as in fuelling the imagery of lovesickness (an illness stemming from too much black bile in the body) in courtly literature.[49]

2.1.3 Latin culture in Iceland

The expansion of Latin Christendom in the long twelfth century is considered one of the prominent factors in the homogenization of European culture during the period.[50] The church brought an ecclesiastical elite culture to Scandinavia, whose members attended cathedral schools that aimed for uniformity in language and curricula and can be considered 'institutional agencies of cultural change'.[51] The members were thus introduced to the same books and learning as the members of the clergy in other countries of Europe.[52] The Icelandic situation was no exception, as demonstrated by numerous studies that give an account of what is known about the education of Icelandic priests and chieftains both abroad and in Icelandic learning centres in the long twelfth century.[53] The level of education of the upper layer of Icelandic society can be

[47] A rich account of the medieval body in the arts of the Middle Ages is provided in Hartnell, *Medieval Bodies*; see also multiple examples in Klibansky, Panofsky, and Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy*.
[48] About the ceiling of the crypt of the Italian Cathedral of Anagni, painted *c*. 1250 CE, see, e.g., Sears, *Ages of Man*, p. 20.
[49] A foundational work on lovesickness in courtly literature is Wack's comprehensive analyses in *Lovesickness*; see also Jacquart and Tomasset, *Sexuality and Medicine in the Middle Ages*.
[50] See the section on the expansion of Latin Christendom in Bartlett, *Making of Europe*, pp. 5–23.
[51] Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, pp. 288–89. For the Icelandic situation, see, e.g., Orrman, 'Church and Society', pp. 460–61; Bagge, 'Nordic Students', p. 2.
[52] Sverre Bagge examines the Scandinavian situation in two essays, 'Transformation of Europe'; 'Europeanization of Europe'.
[53] The most recent contribution is Jón Viðar Sigurðsson, 'The Education of Sturla Þórðarson (and the Icelandic Elite)'. The most thorough account is Sverrir Tómasson's *Formálar íslenskra sagnaritara á miðöldum*. Helgi Þorláksson gives a comprehensive account of what is known about Snorri Sturluson's education in 'Snorri í Odda'; for a wider context, see Gunnar Harðarson, 'Old Norse Intellectual Culture', pp. 35–44; Sverrir Tómasson, 'Erlendur vísdómur'. In 'Situated Knowledge', Bandlien focuses on two learned centres in Iceland: the cathedral school of Skálholt and the Benedictine monastery Þingeyrar.

considered equivalent to other places in Europe at the same time,[54] and this is the layer that commissioned and produced Old Norse texts.

The church had profound effects on the literary culture of Iceland. As Pernille Hermann emphasizes, it also brought a certain ideology; with Christianization, Scandinavia and Iceland gained access to an existing educational structure and a system of literacy, Latin culture, and participation in a supranational society, with access to a common literature and prevailing literary conventions.[55] This includes what can be defined as a medieval Christian worldview, which, as Sverrir Jakobsson has analysed, was 'predominant in Icelandic texts from the twelfth century onwards'.[56]

Thus, the sagas were written at the fertile time of the accumulation of an intense cultural and ideological renewal and during dramatic changes in intellectual life. In a few but important studies, the task is undertaken to lay out the main features of the intellectual culture in medieval Iceland, notably by Sverrir Tómasson in *Formálar íslenskra sagnaritara á miðöldum*, Guðrún Nordal in *Tools of Literacy,* and, most recently, in the essay collection *Intellectual Culture in Medieval Scandinavia* edited by Stefka Eriksen.[57] Furthermore, the database *Islandia Latina*, edited by Gottskálk Jensson, is a vital ongoing project gathering information on all Latin material known and used in medieval Iceland. However, no study to date has emphasized the manifestations of Latin thought on the body and emotions brought to the Old Norse world, nor does a survey exist of the extant manuscripts that transmit these ideas. Therefore, as a basis for the analysis in Chapters 3, 4 and 5, it becomes necessary to recount and contextualize this material evidence, to which I turn below.

2.2 Iceland: Manuscript evidence

The textual evidence of what Latin material was available to medieval Icelanders is extremely fragmentary. This is due to the poor preservation of Latin learned and

[54] Jón Viðar Sigurðsson, 'The Education of Sturla Þórðarson', p. 20; Sverrir Tómasson, *Formálar*, pp. 33–34; Bandlien, 'Situated Knowledge', p. 137, 168–69; Bagge, 'Nordic Students', p. 4.
[55] Hermann, 'Den norrøne renæssance', pp. 48–49. On the introduction of writing in Iceland, see Guðvarður Már Gunnlaugsson, 'Manuscripts and Paleography'; and Louis-Jensen, 'Frontiers'.
[56] Sverrir Jakobsson, 'Hauksbók and the Construction of an Icelandic World View', p. 34. See also his book-length study on the medieval Icelandic worldview, *Við og veröldin*.
[57] Former studies include Turville-Petre, *Origins of Icelandic Literature* and Paasche, *Kristendom og kvad*.

liturgical manuscripts. The vast majority of what existed in Iceland and Norway before the Reformation is now lost without a trace, as Guðvarður Már Gunnlaugsson notes.[58] For the north as a whole, it has been estimated that 99% of the Latin manuscript leaves that existed at the start of the Reformation are now lost.[59]

The fragmented knowledge of what Latin textual material was available in medieval Iceland mainly stems from three kinds of sources. First, limited inventories are preserved of the book possessions of churches from the late twelfth century onwards.[60] Fuller inventories, however, post-date the thirteenth century.[61] Sverrir Tómasson supplies an overview of the latter inventories and concludes that the most common authors of Latin and ecclesiastical learnings were known in Iceland at the time they were made.[62] No private inventories are preserved. Second, scholars have endeavoured to deduce from extant learned vernacular texts, such as *Snorra-Edda* and the *First* and *Third Grammatical Treatises*, which Latin learned works and currents of thought influenced their composition, content, and form.[63] Here, we can additionally count several studies that trace various literary motifs to Latin influences.[64] Third, and most critical, is the material evidence consisting of whole and fragmentary translations and adaptations in Old Norse manuscripts of various learned medieval texts, which testifies to some of the

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[58] Guðvarður Már Gunnlaugsson, 'Latin Fragments Related to Iceland', p. 175.

[59] Ommundsen and Heikkilä, 'Piecing Together the Past', p. 4; see also Ommundsen, 'Traces of Latin Education'; Gottskálk Jensson, 'The Lost Latin Literature of Medieval Iceland'.

[60] Most of the inventories have been published in *Diplomatarium Islandicum* (*DI*). However, the earlier ones hardly mention any books by name. It is only from 1318, with the inventory for ninety-seven churches at the Hólar diocese that a somewhat fuller list appears (*DI* II, pp. 423–89), of which Oleson gives a good account in 'Book Collections'.

[61] These are from the Hólar diocese, and the monasteries at Viðey and Möðruvellir. See the list of books from the 1396 Hólar diocese inventory in *DI* III, pp. 612–13 and from 1525 in *DI* IX, scattered over pp. 296–333, Viðey monastery 1397 inventory is found in *DI* IV, pp. 110–11, and Möðruvellir 1461 in *DI* V, pp. 286–90.

[62] Sverrir Tómasson, *Formálar*, pp. 29–35.

[63] The foremost example being Guðrún Nordal, *Tools of Literacy*. For the learned background of *Snorra-Edda* in particular, see Dronke and Dronke, 'Prologue of the Prose *Edda*'. On the *Third Grammatical Treatise*, see, e.g., Santini, 'Investigation of the Classical Models'. On studies on *Hauksbók*, I refer to Section 2.2.2. Research overviews are provided in Lassen, 'Indigenous and Latin Literature'; Wellendorf, 'Lærdomslitteratur'.

[64] These studies are manifold. For *Njáls saga*, see, e.g., Lönnroth, *Njáls Saga: A Critical Introduction*; Hermann Pálsson, *Uppruni Njálu og hugmyndir*. For *Egils saga*, see Torfi H. Tulinius, *Skáldið í skriftinni*. Grønlie, *Saint and the Saga Hero*, pp. 70–93 (on *Egils saga*), pp. 134–49 (on *Njáls saga*). A research overview from 1993 is provided in Kalinke, 'Old Norse-Icelandic Literature, Foreign Influence on'.

material available. In the subsequent sections, I list the material concerning learned ideas on the body and emotions, with a particular focus on the thirteenth century.

2.2.1 Law, history, hagiography, and encyclopaedias

Before turning to medical and physiological texts, which are often embedded in theological writings, I will examine evidence of legal, historical, hagiographical, and encyclopaedic texts that indicate the contemporary knowledge of humoral physiology and cures.

2.2.1.1 The lawbook *Grágás*

Grágás testifies to the familiarity of a humoral conceptualization of the body already in twelfth-century Iceland, as its oldest part includes a section about healing using cauterization and phlebotomy, the most common humoral cures. The main manuscripts of the lawbook were written from *c.* 1250 to 1280, and the oldest manuscript fragment dates to the third quarter of the twelfth century.[65] The part on humoral cures appears in a section of 'Vígslóði', which was a part of the no longer extant law code 'Hafliðaskrá', argued to have been written in 1117–1122:[66]

> Ef maður brennir mann eða nemur blóð manni til heilindis honum, og hvatki sem maður gerir til heilindis öðrum manni svo að hann vildi að hinn fengi bót af en eigi vanheilsu, og varðar þeim það eigi við lög er lækna vildi mann þótt hinn fái bana af eða skaða.[67]

The mention of these two primary methods to regulate the humours in the body, and the possible unintended harmful consequences, testifies to a humoral understanding of the body, where these methods were considered beneficial for health. The clause further indicates that these methods (and the accompanying conceptualization of the body) were common enough for people in the twelfth century to have had experience with such practices going wrong and to have deemed it necessary in their law to include

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[65] AM 315 d fol.; see *ONP Registre*; Gunnar Karlsson, Kristján Sveinsson, and Mörður Árnason, 'Inngangur', p. xxi.
[66] Ibid., pp. ix–x.
[67] *Grágás*, p. 267. 'If a man cauterizes someone or performs bloodletting on someone for his own health, and whatever a man does for the good health of another man, if he intends for him to be cured but not suffer harm, he is under no legal penalty if the other suffers death or harm from it if his aim was to heal him.'

impunity for a well-intentioned healer. An account of such an incident indeed exists, as *Sturlunga saga* states that the chieftain Ormr Jónsson underwent bloodletting on his artery ('gjósæð') in 1241 but died as a result of complications stemming from the procedure.[68]

2.2.1.2 The cures of Hrafn Sveinbjarnarson

The use of cauterization and bloodletting is periodically mentioned in old Icelandic hagiographies, such as *Jóns saga ins helga*, *Guðmundar saga,* and *Þorláks saga*,[69] which recount events in the twelfth century. *Hrafns saga Sveinbjarnarsonar* is a contemporary saga with hagiographical features, which is estimated to have been written between *c.* 1230 and 1260 but survives only in later manuscripts.[70] The estimated time of writing is just a few decades after the death of its protagonist, the chieftain Hrafn Sveinbjarnarson (d. 1213), who is described in the saga as 'inn mesti læknir ok vel lærðr'.[71] *Hrafns saga* is unique in its descriptions of phlebotomy, cauterizing, and a detailed account of lithotomy (surgical treatment for bladder stones). Some of the accounts concern mental states, which Hrafn influences using his methods. He is able to heal a despondent woman who cried continuously in great mental distress by taking 'æðablóð í hendi í æði þeiri, er hann kallaði þrotandi. En þegar eptir þat varð hon heil'.[72] Further, he is able to cure madness:

> Þorgils hét maðr, er tók vitfirring. Hann var svá sterkr, at margir karlar urðu at halda honum. Síðan kom Hrafn til hans ok brenndi hann í hǫfði díla nǫkkura, ok tók hann þegar vit sitt. Litlu síðar varð hann heill.[73]

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[68] *Sturlunga saga*, p. 551.

[69] See Guðrún P. Helgadóttir, 'Introduction', pp. xcvi–xcix, and examples in *Jóns saga ins helga*, p. 266; *Þorláks saga C*, p. 267; *Saga Guðmundar Arasonar Hóla-biskups*, p. 618; *Heilagra manna søgur*, p. 294.

[70] Guðrún P. Helgadóttir, 'Introduction', p. lxxxviii. The oldest manuscript fragment is from the mid-fourteenth century; see ibid., p. cviii. Guðrún's critical edition of the saga is accompanied by a detailed account of its manuscripts, dating, authorship, and sources.

[71] *Hrafns saga*, p. 2. 'The greatest doctor, and well learned.'

[72] Ibid., pp. 5–6. 'Blood from the vein in her hand which is called *þrotandi*. Immediately afterwards she was healed.'

[73] Ibid., p. 6. 'A man was called Þorgils; he became insane. He was so strong that many men had to restrain him. Then Hrafn came to him and burned a few speckles on his head, and he became sane immediately. A little while later, he was cured.'

Hrafn is thus able to cure the man's mental condition using learned humoral methods. As Guðrún Helgadóttir has demonstrated, these methods and others described in the saga accurately reflect the learned Latin medical doctrine in Hrafn's time — the Salernitan medicine as manifested in the writings of Constantine, Avicenna, and others. Some of the methods have parallels in *Regimen sanitatis* (see Section 2.2.2.3).[74] The saga conveys information on learned medical knowledge in Iceland before 1213 (the time of Hrafn's death) or, at the very least, at the time of its composition between *c.* 1230 and 1260, should the author have used written medical sources in his descriptions. In the saga, Hrafn is said to have been a travelled man, sailing to Norway and then 'vestr til Englands ok sótti heim inn helga Tómas erkibiskup í Kantarabyrgi'.[75] From there, he is said to have visited 'inn helga Egidium í Ílansborg'[76] and to have travelled to Compostela and Rome. As Guðrún points out, it is possible that Hrafn obtained his knowledge from Salerno-trained physicians in these places and acquired medical books.[77]

2.2.1.3 Isidore's *Etymologies*

Isidore of Seville's (*c.* 560–636) enormous encyclopaedia comprising twenty books, *Etymologiae sive Origines,* is one of the most widely known texts in the Middle Ages, touching on several hundred topics of knowledge derived from the classical and early Christian worlds,[78] thus representing knowledge that predates the influx of Latin texts following the translation movement. While many references to the humoral doctrine exist throughout the work in various contexts,[79] the basics of the theory are laid out in Book IV (*De medicina*), within the context of health and medicine. Isidore notes that all diseases stem from an imbalance between the four humours, which he associates with their corresponding elements: air, fire, earth, and water.[80] Methods to regulate the

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[74] Guðrún P. Helgadóttir, 'Introduction', pp. xciv–cviii.
[75] *Hrafns saga*, p. 3. 'West to England and visited the Holy Tómas Archbishop of Canterbury.' Guðrún argues this must have been a year or two before 1196; see Guðrún P. Helgadóttir, 'Introduction', p. lxxiv.
[76] *Hrafns saga*, p. 4. 'The Holy Egidium in Ílansborg', referring to St Giles in Saint-Gilles, Provence.
[77] Guðrún P. Helgadóttir, 'Introduction', p. cviii.
[78] On the influence of the *Etymologies,* see e.g. *Isidore of Seville and his Reception*, ed. by Fear and Wood; Barney and others, 'Introduction to Etymologies', pp. 24–26. On the general influence in medieval Iceland, see Clunies Ross and Simek, 'Encyclopedic Literature'; see also Gunnar Harðarson, 'Hauksbók og alfræðirit miðalda'.
[79] Such as in Book XI, on the human being and portents.
[80] *Etym*. IV. iv.7–v.3.

humours are discussed,[81] noting the general principle in humoral medicine that '[a]ll treatment is applied by use either of opposites or of similarities. By means of opposites, as cold is applied to hot, or moist to dry — just as in a human pride cannot be cured unless it be cured by humility'.[82] Isidore then discusses classic humoral cures, such as dietary regimens, herbal medicine, and surgical methods, such as phlebotomy and cupping glasses that were used to draw bad humours to the surface or out of the body.[83]

Isidore is frequently named as a source and is quoted in Old Norse manuscripts, such as in *Þorláks saga biskups*, which is estimated to have been written around 1200.[84] The many citations and quotations from the *Etymologies* in Old Norse texts indicate that this work was well known in medieval Iceland. One Old Norse manuscript fragment of the *Etymologies* survives, AM Acc. 7, written in Iceland *c.* 1300, a small strip of a dark pergament found in the binding of a later manuscript.[85] Referrals to the work range from only naming it to the systematic use of it as a source. The extant manuscripts date from the second half of the thirteenth century and through the fourteenth century, some of which have been demonstrated to be copies of much older manuscripts that are now lost.[86] Examples include the Norwegian *Konungs skuggsjá* (written *c.* 1250),[87] the Old Norse biblical compilation *Stjórn I* (written at the beginning of the fourteenth century),[88] and several manuscripts containing encyclopaedic material, such as AM 415 4to (*c.* 1310),[89] AM 544 4to (*c.* 1290–1334),[90] AM 764 4to (*c.* 1360–1380),[91] and AM 194 8vo (1387).[92]

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[81] *Etym*. IV. x, IV. ix.
[82] *Etym*. IV. ix.5.
[83] *Etym*. IV. xi.
[84] *Þorláks saga A*, p. 50. The oldest manuscript fragment is from 1240–1260 (AM 383 I 4to). On manuscripts and dating, see Ásdís Egilsdóttir in ibid., p. xxxii.
[85] Andersen, *Katalog over AM Accessoria 7*, p. 132. The lines are from Book II ('De rhetorica et dialectica').
[86] On the roots of AM 194 8vo, see, e.g., Stefán Karlsson, 'Fróðleiksgreinar', pp. 347–49; and Kålund, 'Inledning', p. xxx. On AM 194 8vo, see Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir, 'Universal History', pp. 158, 228–38.
[87] This refers to the section on inhabitable areas; see p. 31 of *Konungs skuggsjá*, ed. by Holm-Olsen. It is estimated to be composed around 1250, and the main manuscript is AM 243 b alfa fol. (1265–1285).
[88] Astås has identified translated passages from at least ten books of the *Etymologies*; see Astås, *Studies in Stjórn*, pp. 24–25, 81–82, 180–81. The main manuscript (AM 227 fol.) is dated to *c*. 1350. See Jakob Benediktsson, 'Some Observations on Stjórn', pp. 31–32, 39.
[89] Printed in *AÍ*, III, p. 54, l.4, comp. *Etym*. XIV. iv.7.

Etymologies are listed in the book inventories of Hólar (1396) and Viðey (1397),[93] in the latter noted as incomplete.

2.2.2 Physiology and Christian cosmology

The oldest preserved Old Norse text explaining the theory of the four humours is estimated to have been written shortly after 1300.[94] This roughly 900-word-long treatise, connecting ancient and medieval physiology to the character and dispositions of humans, is preserved in the compilation *Hauksbók*, with the title *Af natturu mannzins ok bloði*.[95]

Even though the manuscript containing this unique treatise in the Old Norse corpus post-dates the time of writing of *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga* by three to eight decades, it materializes learned ideas on the body and emotions of which traces are also manifested in an earlier body of Old Norse texts. Some of them have been listed above (legal, historical, hagiographical, and encyclopaedic texts), and in the following discussion, I put the treatise in context with the currents of thought transmitted in a body of medieval learned and theological texts, while maintaining a focus on the writings that we have grounds to believe were extant in medieval Iceland and Norway.

The treatise consists of two parts, which differ somewhat in nature. The first section is a theological preamble or preface, elucidating the divine creation, the nature of the four elements, and their harmonious interaction. The second part is a physiological text describing how the elements are inextricably linked to the corresponding four humours in the human body, followed by a systematic explication of the constitution of the humours and their effects on the character and disposition of men.

The Latin sources for this text have hitherto been unidentified. In an expanded version of this chapter, published in the journal *Gripla* (2018), I identified the source of

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[90] This refers to fols. 1–14 of *Hauksbók*; see on the dating Jón Helgason, 'Introduction', pp. xiii, xx. Printed in *Hauksbók*, pp. 150–52. On the sources, see Finnur Jónsson, 'Indledning', p. cxvi.
[91] This manuscript has passages deriving from *Etym*. XI, and the work is mentioned in the text as a source; see Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir, 'Universal History', pp. 79, 94.
[92] The text cites 'Ysidorus' on the development of the foetus, *AÍ*, I, p. 55, l.16, comp. *Etym*. XI. i.143–145, which, however, cannot be the ultimate source.
[93] *DI*, III, p. 613; *DI*, IV, p. 110.
[94] See the discussion on dating below in this same section.
[95] 'On the nature of man and his blood.' The treatise is on folios 16r–17r in AM 544 4to, printed in *Hauksbók*, pp. 180–82.

the elucidation of the theory of the four humours in the second part as *Epistula Vindiciani ad Pentadium nepotem suum*, or *Vindician's Letter to his Nephew Pentadius*.[96] The *Letter* seems to have been widely known in medieval Europe. It gained the status of an authoritative work and appears in many medieval manuscripts, with the earliest one dating from the eighth or ninth century.[97]

The treatise is written on folios 16r–17r in AM 544 4to, between two texts of a theological nature written in the same hand as the treatise. This part of the manuscript is estimated to have been written *c.* 1302–1310.[98] The orthography and linguistic features of the hand of the text have been described by Finnur Jónsson.[99] He remarks that, despite a few Norwegian features in the orthography, both the language and the orthography are, on the whole, Icelandic.[100] Finnur therefore concludes that the scribe was Norwegian but copying an Icelandic original.[101]

2.2.2.1 The theological section of the treatise: Christian cosmology

The first part of *Af natturu mannzins ok bloði* tells of how God created earth, water, air, and fire and how these elements interact in harmony.[102] The elements are layered: uppermost in the world is fire, associated with the sky, which is hot and dry in nature. Below the sky resides the air, which is hot and moist. Next comes water, which is cold and moist, and furthest down is the earth, which is dry and cold in nature. All these are presented as equally vital, and the function and interdependence of them are explained in some detail. Finally, how God created Adam out of the four elements is recounted;

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[96] Brynja Þorgeirsdóttir, 'Humoral Theory in the Medieval North'. Valentine Rose's edition of the *Letter*, based on seven manuscripts, is published in Vindicianus Afer, *Epistula ad Pentadium*, pp. 484–92.
[97] For a non-exhaustive list of medieval manuscripts of the letter, see *Theodori Prisciani Euporiston*, ed. by Rose, p. 484; on its dissemination and influence, see Fischer, 'The "Isagoge" of Pseudo-Soranus', p. 9; Klibansky, Panofsky, and Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy*, p. 112.
[98] Gunnar Harðarson and Stefán Karlsson, 'Hauksbók', p. 271. On the context of this text in Hauksbók, see Brynja Þorgeirsdóttir, 'Humoral Theory in the Medieval North', pp. 35–38. On the manuscript and the hands, see Stefán Karlsson, 'Aldur Hauksbókar', pp. 118–20; Jón Helgason, 'Introduction', pp. ix–xi. On the codicology and palaeography of this manuscript in context with the *Hauksbók* compilation as a whole, see Rowe, 'Literary, Codicological, and Political Perspectives on Hauksbók'; Gunnar Harðarson, 'Hauksbók og alfræðirit miðalda'.
[99] Finnur Jónsson, 'Indledning', pp. xxxi–xxxvi.
[100] Ibid., p. xxxv.
[101] Ibid., pp. xxxv–xxxvi.
[102] *Hauksbók*, pp. 180–81.

therefore, humans embody the likeness of them all in the forms of the four humours. Each humour resonates with one of the elements — blood with fire, red bile with air, black bile with earth, and phlegm with water — and has corresponding qualities.

Echoes of quite a few of the ideas presented in *Af natturu mannzins ok bloði* can be found in the writings by Bede (*c.* 673–735). Various works by Bede have been identified as source texts of medieval Icelandic writings.[103] However, Bede's work is not the ultimate source of this treatise but rather is a part of the same pool of ideas and knowledge. Bede associates the four elements with different strata similarly to *Af natturu mannzins ok bloði*: earth is heaviest and holds the lowermost place, water is lighter but heavier than air, and so forth.[104] Additionally, he discusses the link between the elements, the humours, and the seasons and connects the dominance of each humour to the ages of man.[105] This interrelation appears in many medieval texts, such as in the short account at the beginning of the anonymous eleventh-century *De mundi constitutione* (I. 1–2).[106]

These writings represent the widespread medieval view of the human being as microcosm, the image of the world.[107] What Bede and others described in words, and which also appears in *Af natturu mannzins ok bloði,* has a pictorial form in a well-known diagram in Isidore of Seville's *De natura rerum*, a diagram that was widely copied, reworked, and circulated in different contexts during the Middle Ages.[108] The diagram shows the interconnection (*syzygy*) of the elements, seasons, and humours.[109] At the centre are the words: world, year, man (*mundus*, *annus*, *homo*). With interlacing circles, the schema displays in a clear visual way the four combinations: fire, dry, hot, summer, and red bile; air, moist, hot, spring, and blood; water, moist, cold, winter, and phlegm; and earth, dry, cold, autumn, and black bile.

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[103] See 'Beda Venerabilis' in *Islandia Latina,* ed. by Gottskálk Jensson.
[104] Bede, *De natura rerum,* IV, pp. 195–96. This clarification can be found in other medieval texts, such as William of Conches, *Dragmaticon*, V, pp. 1–2.
[105] Bede, *De temporum ratione*, 35, pp. 391–93.
[106] The relevant text is in Burnett's edition; see Pseudo-Bede, *De mundi constitutione*, p. 18. On the dating of this work, its dissemination, and its sources, see Burnett, 'Introduction', pp. 2–3, 15–16.
[107] The authority most often credited with the idea was Plato; see Sears, *The Ages of Man*, p. 20; Gregory, 'Platonic Inheritance', pp. 62–63.
[108] Regarding the dissemination, reproduction, and influence of the diagram, see Sears, *The Ages of Man*, pp. 17–20; Vossen, 'Über die Elementen-Syzygien'; also Burrow, *The Ages of Man: A Study in Medieval Writing and Thought*, pp. 17–26.
[109] As printed in Isidore of Seville, *Traité*, p. 216. .

A diagram of this type appears in a number of medieval European manuscripts and was adapted to different contexts and was even painted on walls and ceilings.[110] Sometimes, the zodiac was incorporated into the system, and the four ages of man, as is the case in a diagram in the Icelandic manuscript GKS 1812 4to, a compilation that represents the remains of at least three different encyclopaedic manuscripts, dating from *c.* 1192 to 1400.[111] It contains writings on astronomy and time-reckoning, drawings of maps, and the division of philosophy as well as calendars, a Latin glossary, and a chapter from *Íslendingabók*, among other things. The second oldest part of the compilation (GKS 1812 III 4to, *c.* 1225–1250) contains a cosmological diagram in Latin on folio 6*v* (Figure 1).[112] At the centre is a T–O map that shows the three known parts of the world: Asia, Africa, and Europe.[113] Three concentric circles are drawn around the centre, forming a dial that is sliced into four equal sectors. At the outer edges of the outermost circle are the names of the four cardinal points.[114]

[110] There are numerous examples. Such a diagram can be found in a medieval manuscript of William of Conches' *Philosophia mundi* and in a manuscript connected to Pseudo-Bede, *De mundi constitutione*; see Burnett, 'Introduction', pp. 6, 8–9. See also Sears, *The Ages of Man*, p. 20.
[111] For a description of the manuscript and its contents, see Kålund, *Katalog over de oldnorsk-islandske håndskrifter*, pp. 38–41; Kålund, 'Håndskriftbeskrivelse', pp. cxx–ccxxv, in particular about fol. 6v on p. ccxii. See also Gunnar Harðarson, 'Divisio Philosophiae', pp. 1–4.
[112] Kedwards analyses the diagram and its relationship to a larger map on the other side of the folia and puts both in context with Old Norse and European cartography; see 'Cartography', pp. 151–223. See also Simek, *Altnordische Kosmographie*, pp. 63–65, 508–10.
[113] The parts are delineated by a 'T' and encircled. This is a classic circular T-O map, where the 'T' represents the sea that separates the three known parts of the world and 'O' stands for the ocean that encircles the world. See further in ibid., pp. 37–46; Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought*, pp. 13, 22.
[114] From the top: *Meridies* (south), *Occident* (west), *Septentrio* (north). Therefore, one can presume that *Oriens* (east) was written on the left margin that has been cut off.

Figure 1. A cosmological diagram from GKS 1812 III 4to, fol. 6v

Photograph: Jóhanna Ólafsdóttir, Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies

Within the outermost circle are the names of the winds along with the twelve months and signs of the zodiac. The four seasons with their distinctive qualities are in the next (second) circle. The third circle represents the human microcosm; it entails the four ages of man and some accompanying features and elements. The second and third circles provide us with the following four combinations:

estas calida (hot summer)	*autumnus humidus* (moist autumn)	*hiemps frigida* (cold winter)	*ver tepidum* (warm spring)
inuenta [iuventa] (youth)	*senecta* (old age)	*decrepita* (decrepitude)	*infancia* (infancy)
calor spiritus (hot breath)	*humor* (moisture)	*frigus corpus* (cold body)	*tepor sanguinis* (warmth of blood)
ignis (fire)	*aqua* (water)		

The diagram does not incorporate the temperaments into its system, and the humours and elements are included in only the most fragmentary way. Furthermore, autumn and mature age are associated with moisture and water, while medieval European learned texts (e.g., Isidore, Bede, and *Af natturu mannzins ok bloði*) associate both with dryness and the element of earth.[115] Flawed or incomplete as this schema may be, as a whole, it reflects a trace of the larger body of medieval European epistemology on the nature of man and the elements, which is elaborated on in the second part of *Af natturu mannzins ok bloði*.

Additionally, the first part of *Af natturu mannzins ok bloði* places the interrelation of the elements and the humours firmly within the framework of creation and Christian cosmology. As noted above, throughout the twelfth century, 'the tendency to interpret the temperaments theologically grew', and this fuelled the revival and expansion of the doctrine of the four humours.[116] A significant figure in this development was William of Conches (*c.* 1080–*c.* 1154).[117] While William of Conches' *Philosophia mundi* does not link the four humours to characters, it contains writings from the same body of teaching as can be found in *Af natturu mannzins ok bloði*. The elements are linked with the creation, and their nature is associated with the humours in men (Books I and IV).[118]

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[115] In addition, Kedwards notes that the wind scheme in the diagram is erroneous and incoherent; see 'Cartography', pp. 236–37.
[116] Klibansky, Panofsky, and Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy*, p. 106.
[117] See ibid., pp. 102–05.
[118] *Philosophia Mundi* is printed under the name Honorius Augustodunensis in Migne's edition, *Philosophia mundi*, Patrologia Latina 172. On the creation of man, see I. 23, the elements in I. 21 and IV. 20.

It can be noted in this context that Simek has identified an Old Norse translation from *Philosophia mundi*, Book III, in GKS 1812 I 4to, folios 11v–12r (*c.* 1300–1400).[119]

The French cleric Hugo de Folieto (*c.* 1100–1174) goes even further than William and lays out the learned doctrine of the humours in the context of Christian salvation in *De medicina animae*. As an example, he writes that black bile makes people sad out of longing for God, but they can purify themselves by crying the black bile out: 'Purgationem [de cholera nigra] habet per oculos. Ab his enim vitiis, pro quibus tristes efficimur, si per confessionem ejecta fuerint, per lacrymas purgamur."[120] Thus, the theory of the four humours serves as a vehicle for a Christian message. Though no fragments of *De medicina animae* have been found in the Old Norse manuscript corpus, extant Norwegian fragments from 1200 to 1300 show that some writings of Hugo de Folieto were copied in medieval Scandinavia.[121] As for medieval Icelandic clergymen, another notable clerical text by Hugo, *De claustro animae*, is listed in the 1397 inventory of the Viðey monastery.[122]

The creation of man is linked to the four elements in one of the oldest extant Icelandic manuscripts: the Old Norse translation of *Elucidarius* by Honorius of Autun (*c.* 1080–*c.* 1150). This theology textbook, which was popular among the laity in Europe, survives in numerous manuscripts, including eight Old Norse fragments.[123] The oldest of these, AM 674a 4to, dates to *c.* 1200 and is thus among the earliest translations of the Latin text into a vernacular language.[124] This fragment contains the following answer to the question: From what was man created?

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[119] Simek, Altnordische Kosmographie, pp. 67–68.

[120] *De medicina animae*, ed. by Migne, VI, col. 1191. 'The purification [of black bile] is through the eyes, for if we liberate ourselves by confessing the sins that make us sorrowful, we are purified through the tears.'

[121] See Schiebe and Karlsen, 'A Christian Approach', p. 274; Karlsen, 'Fragments of Patristic and Other Ecclesiastical Literature', p. 228.

[122] *DI* IV, p. 111. Hugo de Folieto does not discuss the humours in this work. See also 'Hugo de Folieto' in *Islandia Latina,* ed. by Gottskálk Jensson.

[123] All eight manuscripts are published in Honorius Augustodunensis, *Elucidarius in Old Norse Translation*.

[124] On the manuscript and its background see Firchow and Grimstad, *Elucidarius in Old Norse Translation*, pp. xvii–xxxix; *The Arna-Magnæan Manuscript 674a, 4to: Elucidarius*, ed. by Jón Helgason.

> Af .iiii. hofoþ scepnom. oc callasc hann af þui enn minne heimr. þuiat hann hafþe hold af iorþo enn bloþ af vatne blost af lofste enn hita af elde. Hofoþ hans vas bollot ígliking heimballar.[125]

This represents the core of the idea of man as a microcosm (*enn minne heimr*) and forms a part of a system of thought further laid out in *Af natturu mannzins ok bloði*, where it is connected to the temperaments, seasons, and humours.

The closest parallels to the first part of *Af natturu mannzins ok bloði* of the texts discussed above, namely, the works of Bede, William of Conches, and Hugo de Folieto, and the anonymous *De mundi constitutione*, are not the ultimate sources of the Old Norse treatise. However, the texts named above, along with the first part of the Old Norse treatise, seem to be products of the same learned ideological pool. The first part of *Af natturu mannzins ok bloði* reflects the contemporary linking between theology and the humours, a tendency that has been described as part of a 'revival of the ancient characterological doctrine within the framework of Christian moral theology'.[126]

I now turn to the second part of the treatise, a translation derived from *Epistula Vindiciani*. This deals with physiology according to the medical doctrine of the time.

2.2.2.2 The physiological section of the treatise

The idea of man as microcosm is presented at the beginning of the treatise's physiological section in a more elaborate form, where the four elements are linked to the four humours, and each of their qualities is stated.

> Maðrinn hefír i ser likinði .iiijra hofuðskepna. ok má þat marka a æða bloði mannz ef þat stendr vm stund i keralldí. þa er þat með .íííj. litum. efzt er rauða bloð elldi likt. ok at nátturu heítt ok þurt. Þar næst er rauðbrúnt bloð likt lóptínv at vokua ok verma. Neðzt er melannkolea suarta bloð iórðu likt at lít at nátturu þurri ok kalldri. Þa er flemína vatni likt af vátri nátturv ok kalldri. ok stendr þat vmhverfis bloðit sua sem hit mikla haf rennr vm iarðar

[125] Honorius Augustodunensis, *Old Norse Elucidarius*, p. 14. 'Of the four elements — and because of that, he is called microcosm [lit. 'the smaller world']. For he got his flesh from the earth, his blood from water, breath from air, but his warmth from fire. His head was ball-shaped in the likeness of the world-globe.'

[126] Klibansky, Panofsky, and Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy*, p. 106.

> kringlu. Enn ef skerst bloðlifrin þa rennr vatn er menn kalla vara i staðinn sem haf rennr landanna a meðal.[127]

Epistula Vindiciani does not include the idea of the different strata of the humours and how this can be seen if the blood is kept in a bowl for a while. However, the Hippocratic treatise *Nature of Man* offers us the idea by informing us that 'when men are cut, the blood that flows is at first very hot and very red, and then it flows with more phlegm and bile mixed in it'.[128]

It is noteworthy that this seems to echo in an unusual way a dramatic scene in *Bandamanna saga* (*c.* 1300).[129] At the end of the saga, the complex and shady Óspakr Glúmsson bursts into the house of the man who has now married his beloved wife, Svala, and stabs him to death. The killing is an act of jealousy, as Óspakr himself explains in a verse before leaving the scene of the murder:

> Unna ek eigi
> arfa Hildis
> fagrvaxinnar
> faðmlags Svǫlu.[130]

Óspakr is wounded in return but walks away and is not seen again. In the autumn, a man is found dead in a cave: 'ok stóð hjá honum mundlaug full af blóði, ok var þat svá svart sem tjara. Þar var Óspakr."[131] The sharp feelings of anger and jealousy communicated in Óspakr's stanza, along with the swift killing, seem to be put into context with Óspakr's physiology in this scene. The basin and the black, tar-like blood next to his deceased

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[127] *Hauksbók*, p. 181. 'Man has in himself the likeness of the four elements, and this can be noted in the blood from the veins of a man, if it remains for a while in a cask, it has four colours. Uppermost is red blood, like fire, and hot and dry by nature. Next is red-brown blood, like air by its moisture and heat. Undermost is *Melancholea*, black blood, like earth in colour, and dry and cold by nature. Then there is phlegm, like water, moist and cold by nature, and it surrounds the blood like the great oceans flow around the globe of the earth. But if the blood-liver is cut, the water that men call *vari* flows instead, just like the oceans flow between countries.'

[128] *Nature of man*, VI. 39–41. Transl. Jones, ibid., p. 19. The work is now usually attributed to his student Polybus, fifth century BC.

[129] Estimated to be composed *c*. 1300, oldest manuscript fragment *c*. 1350; see Vésteinn Ólason, 'Family Sagas', p. 114.

[130] *Bandamanna saga*, p. 362. 'I do not like that the son of Hildir enjoys the embrace of the beautifully shaped Svala.'

[131] Ibid., p. 363. 'And beside him stood a basin full of blood, and it was as black as tar. That was Óspakr.'

body create an image of his depressed lovesick melancholic state, which adds another layer illuminating Óspakr's inner condition, with artistic imagery drawing from medieval learned physiology.[132] Autumn is the season of black bile, awakening jealousy, deceit, and hasty temper, as discussed in *Af natturu mannzins ok bloði*.[133]

Next, the treatise reveals the concept of the ideal state of the body, when all four humours are in balance:

> Sua segia nátturu bœkur. at sá maðr er alla hefir þessa .iiij. luti iafnmíkla i sínv bloði. þa er hann val heill. ok hófsamr maðr. ok stǫðugr mundanga bliðr ok ekki míok braðr.[134]

This idea is common, even though it is not found in *Vindician's Letter*, and can for instance be found in Isidore's *Etymologies*.[135] The ultimate source text for the desirability of the proper blend of humours is, however, Hippocrates' *Nature of Man*.[136] *Eukrasia*, proper balance, was the fundamental definition of health in Galen's writings, which describe the best-balanced person as 'good-spirited, affectionate, generous, and wise'.[137] The treatise then goes on to explicate the temperaments and emotions accompanying each of the four humours:[138]

Enn ef rauða bloð er mest i bloði mannz. þa er sa fímr ok flogall. lettr a sér. slægr. ok bráðr. ok ma mikit eta.	(If red blood is greatest in a man's blood, then that man is agile and volatile, light, shrewd and hot-tempered, and can eat a lot.)
Enn ef mestr lutr af bloði mannz er þat er rett bloð er kallat þa er hann bliðr ok hófeskr kátr. ok litillátr. vakr. ok varmr í natturu sinni.	(If the greatest part of a man's blood is what is called right blood, then he is gentle and moderate, cheerful and modest, alert, and warm in his nature.)

[132] This agrees with Lönnroth's points on this scene; see 'Kroppen som själens spegel', p. 48. For Peter Hallberg's alternative view, see his 'Lars Lönnroth: Studier i Olaf Tryggvasons saga etc.', p. 169.
[133] See below and *Hauksbók*, pp. 181–82.
[134] *Hauksbók*, p. 181. 'Nature books tell that a man who has all these four things equally in his blood is a very healthy and moderate man, and steady, justly gentle, and not very hot-tempered.'
[135] *Etym.* IV. 6. 7. See also Pseudo-Bede, *De mundi constitutione*, p. 18.
[136] *Nature of Man*, IV. 4–5.
[137] Galen, *Selected Works*, p. 576. On proper balance, see, e.g., Johnston, *Galen: On Diseases and Symptoms*, p. 43; Penella and Hall, 'Galen's "On the Best Constitution of our Body"', p. 283.
[138] Old Norse text printed from *Hauksbók*, pp. 181–82.

Enn ef suarta bloð er mest þa er hann þungr ok þǫgull. sínkr ok svefnvgr. styggr. ok prettugr. aúfund siukr ok af kalldri nátturu ok þurri.	(If black blood is greatest, then he is heavy and silent, miserly and sleepy, hasty-tempered, and deceitful, envious, and of cold and dry nature.)
Enn ef vari er mestr luti í bloði mannz. þa er hann af kalldri natturu. ok vátri. vstǫðugr. vakr ok udiarfr.	(If phlegm is the greatest part of a man's blood, then he is of cold and wet nature, unstable, alert and un-daring.)

These explications of the characterology of each humour are typical and have parallels in many other medieval texts.[139] It becomes of relevance in Section 4.3 in the analysis of *Njáls saga* that it is very clear that 'bloð' (blood) with the prefixes 'rauða' (red) and 'suarta' (black) in the treatise, refers to the specific humours known in English as 'red bile' and 'black bile'. 'Bloð' without a prefix refers to the blood in the veins, but 'rétt bloð' (right blood) refers to blood as a humour. Semantically, the Old Norse text thus speaks of 'rauða bloð' and 'suarta bloð' as humours in the blood, which is very much in accordance with the humoral doctrine that assumes that the bloodstream in the veins was the carrier of all four humours in a mixture. Blood was one of the humours but also the medium that contained them all.[140]

Following this characterology, the treatise moves on to explain where each humour has its seat in the body, where the exit of each is, and how they are connected with the seasons and ages of man. Thus, for example, black bile is noted to increase in the autumn, and phlegm has its exit through the ears.[141] As noted above, the physiological section stems from a Latin manuscript of an identified text, *Epistula Vindiciani*, whose oldest witness is from the Carolingian period in the eighth or ninth century.[142] The origins of this section, therefore, predate the textual transmission following the Salernitan medical school and the flow of new Latin translations of Arabic science during the transformative changes in the long twelfth century in Europe.

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[139] Klibansky, Panofsky and Saxl print a table juxtaposing nine different texts that communicate the characterology of the humours in *Saturn and Melancholy*, pp. 62–63. Additionally; see Section 2.2.2.3 on *Regimen sanitatis*.

[140] See Nutton, 'Humoralism', p. 287; Cook, 'Physical Methods', pp. 942–44. Because of this, imbalance between the humours could be corrected by the popular method of bloodletting: extracting blood from the appropriate part of the body.

[141] *Hauksbók*, p. 182.

[142] For comparison and discussion, I refer to Brynja Þorgeirsdóttir, 'Humoral Theory in the Medieval North', pp. 52–58.

However, the theological context that the treatise presents is the product of the revival of the doctrine of the four humours within Christian doctrine in the long twelfth century and has resonances in many other writings of that time. The Old Norse treatise, as a whole, thus represents a reworking of *Epistula Vindiciani* into that context. When and where this reworking was made and whether the source text (or texts) was in circulation in Iceland or was copied in Norway remains obscure. Haukr Erlendsson spent many years in Norway, the scribe was presumably Norwegian, and the gathering that includes the treatise might have been inserted.[143] However, an important indication that points to Iceland is found in Finnur Jónsson's investigation of the orthographic and linguistic features of the treatise, which led him to the conclusion that the scribe was copying an original in Icelandic.[144] This would suggest that the treatise represents an even older Icelandic adaptation of this learned material on the physiology of emotions and disposition. Furthermore, as a whole, the treatise communicates an understanding of the body and emotions, which manifests in many extant Old Norse texts, which are listed and described in this chapter.

2.2.2.3 *Fóstbrœðra saga* and *Regimen sanitatis*

Fóstbrœðra saga is often considered among the oldest sagas. Sigurður Nordal and Theodore Andersson argue that its composition was around 1200 and Vésteinn Ólason classifies it as an 'early' saga.[145] However, Jónas Kristjánsson argues for its time of composition in the latter half of the thirteenth century on account of its textual relationship with various sources.[146] One of many such sources is *Regimen sanitatis Salernitanum* (or *Flos Medicinae*), which is a Latin medical poem that was composed sometime in the thirteenth century.[147] It contains medical advice and rules of health for the public in the vein of the Salernitan school of medicine. The poem was immensely popular, circulating in different versions that were amended, expanded, or shortened.[148]

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[143] For an overview of Haukr's background and career, see, e.g., Gunnar Harðarson, *Littérature et spiritualité*, pp. 169–74.
[144] Finnur Jónsson, 'Indledning', pp. xxxv–xxxvi.
[145] Sigurður Nordal, 'Handrit. Aldur. Höfundur', p. lxxii; Andersson, 'Redating *Fóstbrœðra saga*', p. 72; Vésteinn Ólason, 'Family Sagas', p. 115.
[146] Jónas Kristjánsson, *Um Fóstbrœðrasögu*, p. 310.
[147] See Wear, 'The History of Personal Hygiene', pp. 1288–89.
[148] Two versions are published in *Collectio Salernitana*, both under the title 'Flos Medicinae Scholae Salerni', vol. 1, pp. 445–516; vol. 5, pp. 1–104.

As Jónas demonstrates, some of the learned clauses in the Flateyjarbók-variant of *Fóstbrœðra saga* are related to a version of the poem, such as a clause on the number of bones, veins, and teeth in the body.[149] The same applies to a clause that connects emotions and mental faculties to organs: 'reiði hvers manns er í galli, en líf í hjarta, minni í heila, metnaðr í lungum, hlátr í milti, lystisemi í lifr.'[150] The clause appears in the context of love and jealousy when the slave Loðinn feels that his partner Sigríðr has become too intimate with Þormóðr.[151] Jónas has further argued that these clauses were a part of the original saga.[152]

The textual route through which this came about is obscure, not the least on account of the uncertain time of composition of the *Regimen* and its many versions. Whether the poem was known to some degree in thirteenth-century Iceland or whether the information came through some intermediaries is not possible to determine. However, a textual relationship with the *Regimen* also manifests in various later Icelandic manuscripts.[153]

Eight lines from the poem that directly refer to the emotions and characterology following each of the four humours are written on folio 3or in a manuscript of a theological handbook found in Skálholt, written in Iceland. This is AM 671 4to, which is a compilation of different theological texts in Latin and Old Norse, written in several hands.[154] It contains sixty-three leaves. Stefán Karlsson dates the script written in Old Norse on three of the leaves to *c.* 1320–1340.[155] Some other parts of the compilation have

[149] *Fóst*, p. 233 n3. The oldest manuscript containing a part of *Fóstbrœðrasaga* is in AM 544, 4to (Hauksbók, dated to 1302–1310). The Flateyjarbók version (GKS 1005 fol., dated to 1387–1394) includes numerous clauses of learned Latin origins, as Jónas Kristjánsson demonstrates; see *Um Fóstbrœðrasögu,* pp. 240–47.

[150] *Fóst*, p. 226 n1. 'A man's anger is in his gall, his life in the heart, memory in the brain, ambition in the lungs, laughter in the spleen and lasciviousness in the liver.' Compare *Collectio Salernitana*, I, p. 486. See Jónas Kristjánsson, *Um Fóstbrœðrasögu*, pp. 240–47.

[151] *Fóst*, p. 226.

[152] Jónas Kristjánsson, *Um Fóstbrœðrasögu,* p. 80. Similar in *Etym*. XI. i.127, but it does not mention the brain or lungs.

[153] As Jónas lists in *Um Fóstbrœðrasögu*, pp. 242–45. These are, for instance, AM 764 4to (1300–1400) and manuscripts containing medical books (see Table 4; i.e., AM 194 8vo (1387) and AM 434a 12mo (1475–1525)).

[154] Kålund, *Katalog II*, pp. 87–89; *ONP Registre*. Parts of *Regimen sanitatis* are also found in a Norwegian lawbook, AM 309 fol., 91r, dated to *c*. 1325; see *ONP Registre*.

[155] *Guðmundar sögur biskups*, ed. by Stefán Karlsson, pp. xl–xli.

been presumed to be older (*c.* 1300)[156] but have not been subjected to a close study. The Latin text on the four humours has been printed,[157] but the lines were not translated into English before.

AM 671 4to, 30r

Largus amans hilaris ridens rubeique coloris cantans carnosus satis audax atque benignus —Talis est sanguineus	(Generous, loving, cheerfully laughing, of red complexion, | singing, fleshy in appearance, sufficiently bold and kind. — Such is the sanguine kind.)
Versutus fallax irascens p[r]odigus audax astutus facilis siccus croceique coloris —Talis est colericus	(Cunning, deceitful, prone to anger, lavish, bold, | sly, prone to dryness, of golden complexion. — Such is the choleric kind.)
Est sompnolentus pinguis facie color albus, est hebes huic sensus piger in spiramine mulltos —Talis flegmaticus	(He is lethargic, with thick appearance, of pale complexion. | He is languid, his sense is dull, he breaths intensely. — Such is the phlegmatic kind.)
Non expers fraudis timidus luteique coloris invidus et tristis, gracilis dexterque tenacis —Talis melancolicus	(He is not free from deceit, fearful, of yellow complexion, | hateful and sorrowful, slender, stingy [or skilfully persistent]. — Such is the melancholic kind.)

It is quite typical, considering how the humoral doctrine was embedded into the Christian context in the long twelfth century, that this quotation is placed between two theological texts in the manuscript, as is also the case of the treatise *Af natturu mannzins ok bloði* in *Hauksbók*. Yet, these two cases of reference to the *Regimen sanitatis* (used in a vernacular saga as a literary device to connote the angry and jealous feelings of Loðinn, and quoted in Latin in a theological handbook) are also fine examples of the different Old Norse textual contexts into which the humoral characterology penetrated.

[156] *DI,* I, p. 433; Kålund, *Katalog II*, p. 87.
[157] Printed in *DI*, I, p. 434; Lars Lönnroth, 'Kroppen som själens spegel', p. 51, with his commentary on the text. The corresponding text in versions of *Regimen sanitatis* is published in *Collectio Salernitana*, vol. 1, p. 484; vol. 5, pp. 48–49.

2.2.3 Medical books

Icelandic medieval manuscripts materially manifest the textual transmission of Salernitan medicine to Iceland in the thirteenth century, where humoral physiology is the basis for cures. All extant fragments and manuscripts of Old Norse medical books are translations or adaptations of foreign material. They are listed in Table 4.[158]

Table 4. Medieval fragments and manuscripts of Old Norse medical books

	Collection	*Shelf mark*	*No. of leaves*	*Dating*	*Origin*
1.	Copenhagen, Arnamagnæan Institute	AM 655 XXX, 4to[159]	4	1250–1300	Iceland
2.	Copenhagen, Arnamagnæan Institute	AM 696 I, 4to[160]	2	*c.* 1350	Norway or Iceland
3.	Reykjavík, Arnamagnæan Institute	AM 673 a II, 4to[161]	[27 lines]	*c.* 1370	Iceland
4.	Copenhagen, Arnamagnæan Institute	AM 194, 8vo[162]	12	1387	Iceland
5.	Copenhagen, Arnamagnæan Institute	AM 434 a, 12mo[163]	40	1450–1500	Iceland
6.	Dublin, Royal Irish Academy	MS 23 D 43[164] [8vo]	74	1475–1500	Iceland

The four-leaved fragment AM 655 XXX, 4to represents the oldest extant traces of an Old Norse medical book. It contains fifty-two clauses, which describe ailments and their

[158] Additionally, a Danish fragment of a medical book, AM 187, 8vo, is preserved in the Arnamagnæan collection, written in Danish and Latin, dated to 1400–1424, which was bought by Árni Magnússon at an auction in Denmark. The text is printed in *Det Arnamagnæanske håndskrift nr. 187*, ed. by Såby.
[159] Published on Menota, *Úr læknisbók: AM 655 XXX 4to*, ed. by Schwabe and Karls. This includes a facsimile, diplomatic, and normalised version. It was also published in 1860 in a normalised version that contains small errors, *Fire og fyrretyve prøver*, ed. by Konráð Gíslason.
[160] Published in 1906, *Gamalnorsk fragment*, ed. by Hægstad.
[161] Published in 1913, *Eit stykke av ei austlandsk lækjebok*, ed. by Hægstad.
[162] Published in 1908, *Alfræði íslenzk I*, pp. 61–84, ed. by Kristian Kålund. Here, I refer to the parts of AM 194, which contain a leech book, book of stones, and instructions for bloodletting (37r–48v).
[163] Published in 1907, *Den islandske lægebog*, ed. by Kålund.
[164] Published in 1931, *Old Icelandic Medical Miscellany*, ed. by Larsen.

cures and the medical effects of various (mainly) plants. The medical advice is based on humoral cures, which can for example be seen from the advice of making a potion out of celandine to dry heavy humours in the body: 'þunga vøkva í manni þurrkar þat.'[165] This fragment, like the other five, contains clauses adapted from Constantine the African's *De gradibus*. Marius Kristensen has shown that *De gradibus* was transmitted to Scandinavia through the translations and adaptations of a Danish physician, Henrik Harpestræng (d. 1244).[166] Harpestræng's other main source text was the widespread Latin medical poem *De viribus herbarum* from *c.* 1100, written under the pseudonym Macer.[167] It has further been established that an Old Norse translation of Harpestræng's work once existed, of which the two-leaved fragment AM 696 I 4to (no. 2 in *Table 4*) is a later copy.[168] The above thus demonstrates the movement of Latin medical literature from Salerno to Denmark through Norway to Iceland.

However, all six manuscripts additionally contain material that does not stem from any extant writings of Harpestræng.[169] The medical books have an obscure textual relationship, and it is difficult to determine to what degree the younger and fuller manuscripts represent material available in the thirteenth century when the oldest one was written. Parts of all the manuscripts are related through a common source, but to a varying degree in different sections, and each has its own additional material.[170]

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[165] *Úr læknisbók: AM 655 XXX 4to*, fol. 4r, line 4. 'It dries heavy humours in a man.'

[166] Kristensen, 'Indledning', pp. xi, xxii. Harpestræng's work survives in two main manuscripts, both from *c.* 1300; NKS 66, 8vo (Copenhagen, Royal Library) and K 48 (Stockholm, National Library), published by Marius Kristensen in *Harpestræng: Gamle danske urtebøger, stenbøger og kogebøger*. A table showing the corresponding chapters and examples is in ibid., pp. xix–xxii. Harpestræng is thought to have been the canon of Roskilde and a royal Danish physician, who possibly studied or worked in Orléans. See Hauberg, 'Henrik Harpestræng'; Johnsson, 'Henrik Harpestraeng. A Danish Salernitan'; Kværndrup, 'Harpestreng'.

[167] On *De viribus herbarum*, which largely derives from Plini's *Natural history*, see Flood, 'The Medieval Herbal Tradition of Macer Floridus'.

[168] See Hægstad in *Gamalnorsk fragment*, pp. 9–10. See also Kålund, '[Introduction and Commentary]', pp. 9–10.

[169] It has been speculated that Harpestræng wrote another medical book, perhaps a leech book which is no longer extant, but would have been translated into Old Norse at least before *c.* 1250. See Kålund, '[Introduction and Commentary]', p. 10; Kristensen, 'Indledning', p. v; Larsen, 'Introduction', p. 26.

[170] This is a very brief summarization of my own examination and comparison of the six texts, which was also based on the studies of the editors of each manuscript text, published with their editions as they are cited in Table 4 (except AM 655, of which no previous study exists). A deep,

This is a common problem in the study of medieval medicine, as Faith Wallis points out, because it results from the specific production culture of medical texts in the Middle Ages. As opposed to medical texts within scholastic education, which were more uniform, medical texts in the vernacular and those from earlier times when medicine was not taught through institutions were invariably 'subjected to radical and unabashed reworking, dismemberment and de-authorization'.[171] The rewritings took aim at their individual specific purpose and context, and because herbal pharmacology was the most popular subject within medieval medicine, that is where 'the most disturbed textual traditions are found'.[172]

This poses a problem for the modern scholar striving to generalize from the material about what people in the Middle Ages knew and thought. However, Wallis calls attention to the fact that the selection and reorganization in each manuscript were 'not mechanical or random; choice and arrangement almost invariably mean something', and this communicates information about their user and purpose.[173] Viewing the manuscript AM 655 through the approach of material philology and codicology, the fragment transmits information about its intellectual, social, and economic context. As Matthew Driscoll notes, the physical features of a manuscript inevitably bear traces of its cultural background, and its use and purpose, and are thus an 'integral part of its meaning; one needs therefore to look at "the whole book", and the relationship between the text and such features as form and layout, illumination, rubrics and other paratextual features'.[174] The specific dynamics of the Icelandic environment and society in the thirteenth century influenced the production of AM 655 XXX 4to, of which it bears a trace. No study has yet been conducted specifically on this manuscript and its context.[175] To obtain an impression of the value and use of the knowledge that the fragment contains, I examined the manuscript in Copenhagen in August 2017.

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comprehensive study of the context, history, and codicology of the corpus as a whole could yield highly interesting results.

[171] Ibid., p. 106. On this problem, see also Jones, 'Medical Books Before the Invention of Printing'.

[172] Wallis, 'Experience of the Book', p. 109.

[173] Ibid., p. 105.

[174] Driscoll, 'The Words on the Page', p. 90.

[175] Kålund's comparison of AM 655 to AM 434 in *Den islandske lægebog* is the most detailed account of the fragment, as of yet.

EXCURSUS: A CODICOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF AM 655 XXX, 4TO

1. Shelf mark, format, repository

The manuscript is preserved at the Arnamagnæan Institute, University of Copenhagen. It is catalogued with thirty other pergament fragments of different origins and content under the same shelf mark — differentiated by the numbers I–XXXIII.[176] Even though the shelf mark indicates quarto size, the dimensions of the fragment correspond to octavo, or 15.7 x 12.3 cm. The fragment is in a modern conservation binding and bears no trace of its original binding.

2. Language and country of origin

The text is written in Icelandic and thus presumably in Iceland. A close examination of its linguistic features and orthography has not yet been done. In the absence of such a study, an indication is provided through Kålund's examination of a nearly identical text that appears in the younger AM 434, published with variants from AM 655. Kålund observes that the text of 434 includes some Danish and Norwegian words and word forms, testifying that it stems from a Norwegian translation of a Danish text.[177] Many of these also appear in 655, which is, however, not the exemplar of 434, as the latter contains readings that are more correct. The common Old Norse ancestor of both, predating 655, is likely to have been transmitted through this route.

3. Dating

Three scholars have dated the fragment to the second half of the thirteenth century.[178] They have not specified their arguments for the dating. The possible identification of the scribe and a close inspection of the palaeographical features, language, and orthography of the text might result in a narrower frame for the time of writing.

4. Palaeographical information

The text is written in one hand, in proto Gothic script. The ink is dark-brown in colour, sometimes black, and appears dense and clear on the pages.

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[176] The majority are from the thirteenth century; some are among the very oldest in the Arnamagnæan collection (*c*. 1200). Discrepancy in the numbers is caused by two of the fragments having two numbers. Descriptions are on pp. 58–67 in Kålund, *Katalog* II.

[177] Kålund, '[Introduction and Commentary]', pp. 44–46. The text in question is published on pp. 25–30 in ibid.

[178] Hreinn Benediktsson, *Early Icelandic Script*, p. xlix; Kålund, *Katalog* II, p. 66; and Konráð Gíslason, *Um frumparta*, p. lxxxv.

5. Number of leaves and their collation

The fragment consists of four conjoint leaves (two bifolia). The text is continuous and uninterrupted through all eight pages but begins and ends *in medias res*. It can, therefore, be assumed that the leaves formed an inner part of a quire. The leaves have been foliated with a pencil in the top right corner (1–4).

6. Support and its condition

The support is worn and brown in colour and is darker at the edges with scattered signs of rot or mould. The text is nevertheless relatively clear. Kålund remarks (1894) that the leaves have been damaged by numerous small holes.[179] These holes have since been repaired, but the signs are clearly visible. All four leaves show marks of regular horizontal and lateral folds, similar on all four. The folds could indicate that the fragment had once been stored folded or that it was used in some type of packing or binding.

7. Text area and layout

The text is written neatly in one column, and each page has exactly seventeen lines. The margins are 1–1.5 cm at the left, right, and top of each page, and the bottom margins are 3 cm. There are no signs of trimming. There are signs of pricking at the outer margins.

Most articles start at the beginning of a new line, and space is left blank where the former ends. This results in 2–4 cm gaps at the end of the lines where the articles end. Thus, the writing field is not used to the fullest, but the text is laid out in such a way that primarily facilitates quickly finding the sought information.

8. Initials, rubrics, and illuminations

There are no rubrics or illuminations in the manuscript. Seven black initials are in the text. Additionally, at the points where new articles start, scattered faint and small initials are on the far edges of the left margins, presumably to indicate where initials should later be placed in the margins, perhaps by a separate illuminator. Where an initial is intended, the corresponding letter is missing in the text itself.

9. Provenance

No slip accompanies this manuscript, and there is no record or other information of its provenance or how it came into the hands of Árni Magnússon. No marginalia indicates previous owners or readers.

[179] Kålund, *Katalog* II, p. 66.

10. Content

The text contains fifty-two articles of a medicinal nature. Twenty-nine refer to ailments and their cures (leech book), and twenty-three are primarily on the medical effects of plants (herbal pharmacology).

Each article is short and concise, and most refer to common and general health problems one could reasonably expect in a thirteenth-century household. For instance, there are cures for insect bites, infections, cough and lung problems, hoarseness, eye problems, problems of digestion, and bad breath, as well as how to exterminate mice and flies. There is also advice against bleeding, for healing wounds, and for getting rid of warts. There is counsel on how to minimize lasciviousness, prevent conception, and possibly oblique instructions for abortions: 'Gras þat er rubea heitir, þat er roðagras — Þat hrindr út ór óléttri konu, þó at barn sé dautt."[180] The text further refers to authorities, such as Galen, Hippocrates, and Dioscorides, as is frequently encountered in manuscripts of this type.[181] The text shows that the material was adjusted to the Icelandic audience, as many plant names are in Icelandic, such as 'rubea', which is explained with the addition of the Icelandic word 'roðagras'.[182] That is *rubia tinctorum*, or rose madder, a plant also used to dye cloth.

The conclusion of the codicological examination is as follows. The organization of the layout, with gaps in the writing field that result from most articles starting on a new line and allowing for initials for each, shows that the practical aim of finding relevant information governs the layout of the text. The fact that the scribe has not saved the writing field but left intentional blanks in the interest of practical use, further indicates that value was placed on the book as an instrument, for it is the instrumental purpose of the text that controls the layout rather than the objective of using the costly vellum to the fullest. The small size of the leaves (octavo) points to the original codex having been made small enough to be carried around and thus used as a handbook. The textual content further shows that adaptations were made in the translation because Icelandic

[180] *Úr læknisbók: AM 655 XXX 4to*, fol. 2v, line 12. 'The plant called rubea, that is *roðagras* (lit: reddening plant) expels a baby out of a pregnant woman, even if it is dead.' This was a common way in medieval medical texts to explain how to abort; see Riddle, 'Manuscript Sources for Birth Control'.

[181] On this tradition, see Wallis, 'Experience of the Book', p. 108.

[182] *Úr læknisbók: AM 655 XXX 4to*, fol. 2v, line 12.

names were found for some of the medicinal plants mentioned, which indicates that the information was used or meant to be used. The medical conditions discussed in the fragment concern everyday life rather than rare or transcendent conditions and thus reflect a selection of cures based on common functionality. All of the above evidence supports that this medical book was considered practical and of value and that its purpose was to be carried around and used as an instrument in medical or healing practice in thirteenth-century Iceland.

The text of the fragment recommends the use of some plants that are not native to Iceland, which raises the question of how the users of this book would succeed in following some of the advice it contains. Archaeological evidence combined with pollen analysis and ethnobotanical findings at twelve monastic sites in Iceland has revealed that there were botanical gardens at monasteries in Iceland during the Middle Ages, where medicinal plants were grown.[183] Additionally, species of healing plants that are not a part of the Icelandic fauna have been identified.[184] Further research on this topic awaits,[185] but this is in accordance with how the contemporary European monasteries and abbeys operated, where many had large herb gardens with medicinal plants, and medicine based on the Greco-Roman tradition and spiritual guidance was taught as book discipline and practised.[186]

The closest relatives of the thirteenth-century AM 655 are the late fifteenth-century AM 434 and MS 23 D 43.[187] How well they represent the knowledge extant at the time 655 was written cannot be determined with any certainty at this point. Nevertheless, both manuscripts reflect how psychological and emotional states are viewed as a physical condition, such as the following examples demonstrate:

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[183] Steinunn Kristjánsdóttir, Larsson, and Åsen, 'The Icelandic Medieval Monastic Garden'.
[184] Steinunn Kristjánsdóttir, 'Skriðuklaustur Monastery — A Medical Centre of Medieval Iceland', p. 213.
[185] Steinunn Kristjánsdóttir's important recent work, *Leitin að klaustrunum*, synthesises what is currently known about fourteen medieval monasteries in Iceland.
[186] Park, 'Medical Practice', p. 616. It has been established that Skriðuklaustur monastery (1493–1554) was a medical centre; see Steinunn Kristjánsdóttir, 'Skriðuklaustur Monastery — A Medical Centre of Medieval Iceland'.
[187] AM 434 has nearly all the text of 655 in almost the same order and often verbatim. About ¾ of 655's material is also in 23 D 43, often near verbatim, but in separate places in two different sections of it (leech book and charms) and in no particular order.

> vid bradlyndi
> Hier hefur vid bradlyndi. Tak apium ok gef at drecka. þa mun reidi linna. enn gledi þroaz enn lund batna.[188]

In the compound drug section of MS 23, prescriptions against anger, fright, and hot temper are listed.[189] There is also medicine against sorrow and anxiety, and medicine that comforts grief and induces cheerfulness. Another medicine makes the patient happy and merry.[190] Even madness and treacherous thoughts had cures described, as these two clauses from AM 434 show:

> Vid vitlausann mann: tak solseqvium ok abrutanum ok salviam, graus þessi III stappa med vine ok gef honum ath drecka þria daga edur fimm.[191]

> Reykelsi […] tecr flug ur haufdi ok flærd-samligar hyggiur burt hrindur. [192]

This last clause can be found as fragmentary in AM 655.[193] The origins of these clauses stem from the same medical source, to which the thirteenth-century AM 655 testifies was known, used, and considered of value in thirteenth-century Iceland and is likely to be a copy of an even older source written in Icelandic.

2.3 Conclusion: Adaptation of Latin learning

The Latin learned bodily conceptualization of emotions was embedded in the thought system and ideology of Latin Christendom and became synthesized in 'the Western Christian vision or conception of the human being'.[194] This underlying physical

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[188] *Old Icelandic Medical Miscellany*, p. 125. 'For hasty temper. Here is for hasty temper. Take *apium* [celery] and give to drink. Then the anger will soothe, and joyfulness increase, and the temper improve.' Also in AM 434; see *Den islandske lægebog*, p. 24.
[189] *Old Icelandic Medical Miscellany*, pp. 101–02.
[190] Ibid., pp. 99, 102.
[191] *Den islandske lægebog,* p. 25. 'For an insane man: Take marigold and southernwood and sage, mash those three plants with wine and give him to drink for three days or five.' Similar in MS 23; see *Old Icelandic Medical Miscellany,* p. 119.
[192] *Den islandske lægebog,* p. 12. 'Incense […] drives away wild fancies and treacherous thoughts from the head.' Also, in MS 23, see *Old Icelandic Medical Miscellany,* p. 51; in AM 194, see *Alfræði íslenzk I*, pp. 67–68. On the translation of 'fl[a]ug' as 'wild fancies', see Larsen's comment in *Old Icelandic Medical Miscellany*, p. 261.
[193] *Úr læknisbók: AM 655 XXX 4to*, fol. 3r, line 9.
[194] Boquet and Nagy, 'Medieval Sciences of Emotions', p. 25.

understanding can be viewed as omnipresent, as it penetrated various sectors of culture in medieval Europe. *Íslendingasǫgur* are written at a time of intense cultural activity throughout Europe. Europe was becoming increasingly homogenized due to the expansion of Latin Christendom, and the church brought a flow of knowledge, language, and texts to Iceland and Scandinavia that were similar or identical to those elsewhere in Europe. This potentially influenced the conceptualization of the body and emotions as depicted in the sagas written at the accumulation of this period.

The purpose of this chapter was to explore the textual and manuscript evidence for learned Latin ideas of the body and emotions in thirteenth-century Iceland to establish an outline of its manifestation within the intellectual culture of the social layer that produced the sagas. The textual evidence that has been presented here comes from law, hagiography, contemporary sagas, medical books, compilations, and theological texts and stretches from the very earliest manuscripts in the Arnamagnæan collection dating from the late twelfth century. Based on how variable the manuscript evidence is, it can reasonably be concluded that these ideas were known among the learned elite in Iceland.

Subsequently, to what extent these particular ideas can illuminate the probing of the literary depiction of bodily emotions in *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga* becomes of interest. The sagas are literary works; therefore, one would not expect to find elaborations on the physiology of emotions in them in a scholarly manner. Rather, one would expect to find literary devices, metaphors, and imagery applied in the artistic illustration of emotions infused with Latin concepts. Furthermore, one would expect to find markers of a creative interaction of Latin models and vernacular traditions, in keeping with the originality of the genre. These would not necessarily appear as obvious and direct textual borrowings but as appropriations reworked into the artistic context of each saga.

As Gunnar Harðarson notes in his examination of the characteristics of the early Icelandic intellectual context, the Old Norse textual culture 'presupposes familiarity with, and deployment of, Latin intellectual culture', but they are not 'slavish imitations' but appropriations for their own purposes, and this fusion 'helped to generate what has come to be acknowledged as highly original work'.[195] And as Stefka Eriksen remarks, the

[195] Gunnar Harðarson, 'Old Norse Intellectual Culture', p. 36.

expressions of intellectual culture are always 'translated and adapted: they are a result of the creator's cognitive agency to create a cultural expression which is to serve a certain purpose within a certain target culture'.[196]

It is thus the interaction and intersection of native and non-native traditions that become of interest in the remaining three chapters of this second part of the dissertation centring on the body. In the following chapter, I explore how imagery deriving from Latin knowledge systems can be seen as having infused the depiction of Egill's melancholy and how this imagery is deployed in an amalgamation with vernacular themes, resulting in a very distinct characterization and narrative artistry. Next, I explore how the emotional state of characters in *Njáls saga* is expressed using metaphors and imagery that epitomize emotions as a material force within the character, that can fill the human body up and even overflow (that is, 'hydraulic metaphors' for emotions). In the third and final chapter of this part, I probe what the circumlocutions in the kennings of skaldic poetry can communicate about the contemporary bodily conceptualization of emotions, and how this is manifested in *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga*.

[196] Eriksen, 'Introduction', p. 9.

3 EMOTIONS OF THE BLACK BILE

3.1 Egill's vulnerability

Egill Skalla-Grímsson sometimes feels like a caricature of extreme Viking masculinity. Set in the ninth and tenth centuries, *Egils saga* draws a picture of Egill as exceptionally big and strong, a powerful chieftain and skilful warrior who wins every battle, a protector of women, slayer of subordinate men and *berserkir* — as well as being an outstanding poet. In these aspects, Egill conforms to the hegemonic masculine ideal held within the saga, in the sense that it refers to 'culturally exalted' gender practices that are placed at the top of a hierarchy, based on the subordination of other masculine types.[1] In this sphere, to be passive or behave softly undermines one's masculinity, while action and agency reinforce it. Thus, we find the grand men of the saga reprimanded when they stray from this ideal: Egill's grandfather, Kveld-Úlfr, is scolded for not taking revenge but instead lying in bed overcome with sorrow for the loss of his son,[2] and Egill himself receives friendly advice that it is not manly to sit passively in grief.[3] Indeed, when it

[1] 'Hegemonic masculinity' is coined and defined by the sociologist R. W. Connell; see Connell, *Masculinities*, pp. 76–77 (quote on p. 77). Gareth Lloyd Evans adopts this model and applies it to Old Norse masculinities, see Evans, *Men and Masculinities in the Sagas of Icelanders*. See also Bandlien, 'Man or Monster?', pp. 133–36.
[2] *Eg*, p. 60.
[3] *Eg*, pp. 148, 294–96.

comes to masculine displays of feelings, especially of sorrow and grief, the hegemonic male's 'emotive script', as defined by Sif Rikhardsdottir, prescribes that such emotions 'should be suppressed and rearticulated into action'.[4]

And as a rule, it is surely through fierce action and brutal physical force that Egill handles obstacles and adversaries. He viciously asserts his dominance over childhood playmates and refuses to be subordinate to anyone, be they his father, brother, fellow chieftains, or kings and queens. He is a dark saga hero, raw and unruly, a descendant of half-trolls and shapeshifters, ugly and swarthy, and a master of the magic of runes. While he is extremely loyal to his friends and allies, many of whom show deep respect for him, and follows the ethical codes of the honour-based society of the saga world, he is also liminal, cruel, and animalistic: biting a man's throat, plucking out another's eye, and burning people alive.[5] He is thus certainly far from the Christian ideal of 'rational, tempered and civilized' masculinity,[6] instead, conforming to what has been described as the Old Norse 'aggressive masculine ethic'.[7] There is thus an intriguing paradox in the fact that, when it comes to Egill's emotions, this forceful, dominant hero and master of words repeatedly becomes speechless, helpless, and incapacitated — even to the point of death — on account of being overcome by his *feelings*.

3.2 Imagery of noble emotions

The term 'melancholy' has become synonymous with depression and sadness in many modern languages. The word stems from ancient Greek, literally meaning 'black bile'.[8] As stated in *Af natturu mannzins ok bloði,* the melancholic character type was 'þungr ok þǫgull. sínkr ok svefnvgr. styggr. ok prettugr. aúfund siukr ok af kalldri nátturu ok þurri'.[9] This means that this particular character type was physically especially prone to

[4] Sif Rikhardsdottir, *Emotions in Old Norse Literature*, p. 89. Sif defines 'emotive script' as referring to the 'literary representations of emotions' that 'dictate the rules for emotional behaviour within any given text, utilising narrative structures, verbal or behavioural cues and context' (p. 28).
[5] *Eg*, pp. 210, 228, 117–18, respectively.
[6] As discussed by Bandlien, 'Man or Monster?', p. 164.
[7] Meulengracht Sørensen, *The Unmanly Man*, p. 21.
[8] Melan- (*μελαν-*, 'black') + kholē (*χολή,* 'bile'). See 'melancholy, n.1', in *OED*.
[9] *Hauksbók*, p. 181. 'Heavy and silent, miserly and sleepy, hasty-tempered, and deceitful, envious, and of a cold and dry nature.'

falling into a melancholic state. Egill is described as 'svartr á hár',[10] 'svarteygur',[11] and 'svartbrúnn'.[12] Considering his swarthy appearance, it is noteworthy that people with dark complexions were considered especially predisposed to melancholy.[13] Furthermore, black bile was thought to be strongest in the autumn, and people were thus thought to be more sensitive to melancholy in that season.

A subtype of melancholy, and a disease of black bile with similar symptoms and cures, was lovesickness, sometimes termed as love-melancholy. In my MA thesis (2015), I investigate the manifestation of lovesickness in *Egils saga*, other *Íslendingasǫgur,* and courtly literature.[14] As I recount in the MA thesis, the medical symptoms of lovesickness became a literary symbol in the expression of the noble love of knights and kings in the courtly literature translated into Old Norse in the early thirteenth century. I argue how Egill demonstrates clear signs of the illness when Ásgerðr indicates that Egill's love for her is unrequited.[15] His symptoms are all in accordance with those of lovesickness in medieval medical treatises circulating in Europe in the long twelfth century: Egill becomes sorrowful, silent, stooping, idle, and helpless on account of his longing for Ásgerðr.[16] Lovesickness was considered a disease of the aristocracy, a 'marker of precedence, like wealth and leisure'; it was 'an occupational hazard of the nobility'.[17] The principal remedies were sexual intercourse, drinking wine, bathing, conversing with friends, and enjoying music and poetry.[18] Discussions with the patient about the object of his affection, preferably in a defamatory way about her 'stinking dispositions', were also

[10] *Eg*, p. 80. 'Black-haired.'
[11] *Eg*, p. 143. 'Black-eyed.' The adjective 'skolbrúnn' is also used here to describe Egill. It has sometimes been translated to English as 'dark skinned' but is more likely to refer to big or prominent eyebrows.
[12] *Eg*, pp. 194, 231. 'Black-browed.' Self-description in stanzas. Clunies Ross points out that this is a physical trait shared by many poets in sagas of poets, which are often described as dark (or red), ugly and unruly. See 'Art of Poetry and the Figure of the Poet'.
[13] See, e.g., Klibansky, Panofsky, and Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy*, p. 59; Pormann, 'Introduction', p. 7.
[14] Brynja Þorgeirsdóttir, 'Ástsýki í *Eglu* og fleiri miðaldabókmenntum'. See also a peer-reviewed article based on the thesis, Brynja Þorgeirsdóttir, 'Elskhuginn Egill Skallagrímsson'.
[15] *Eg*, p. 148. Brynja Þorgeirsdóttir, 'Ástsýki í *Eglu*', pp. 45–48.
[16] *Eg*, pp. 148–50.
[17] Wack, *Lovesickness*, pp. 60–62, 166–73, quote on p. 61.
[18] Constantine the African, *Viaticum*, pp. 192–93; Wack, *Lovesickness*, p. 45.

thought to be of benefit in making the patient disaffected with his beloved.[19] However, the principal and best method was considered to be the patient's enjoyment of his particular female object of desire. As that was usually not possible (hence the lovesickness), he was encouraged to meet other women, preferably many.[20]

Adding to this argument, for the present purpose of emphasizing the noble and aristocratic features of the illness being present in the Old Norse literary tradition, one can unsurprisingly find nobles in the *konungasögur* described as having a thorough knowledge of this illness or suffering dearly from it.

The lovesick anguish and heartaches of King Óláfr helgi Haraldsson in the different versions of *Óláfs saga helga* have been thoroughly analysed by Anne Heinrichs.[21] In *Morkinskinna*, thought to be composed around 1220, King Eysteinn Magnússon displays his close knowledge of the remedies for lovesickness in the *þáttr* of Ívarr Ingimundarson.[22] King Eysteinn sees that his much-esteemed and noble poet is deeply troubled, but characteristically, the lovesick Ívarr does not want to reveal the cause of his unhappiness. The king eventually succeeds in getting Ívarr to admit that the reason for his torment is his love for a woman. Eysteinn begs him not to be 'hugsjúkr'[23] (literally mind-sick), and subsequently, his advice follows in detail the remedies for lovesickness discussed above. The king's first recommendation is the primary cure; he offers to help Ívarr to acquire the woman he loves. When that turns out to be impossible, Eysteinn resorts to the second-best remedy and proposes that he introduce Ívarr to many courtly women. Ívarr reveals that each time he sees a beautiful woman, it only deepens his grief because it reminds him of his beloved lady. The king then offers him distractions — all according to the book — in the form of entertainment and travel, but Ívarr refuses. Lastly, the king offers to discuss the woman with Ívarr, which he accepts.

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[19] Gerard of Berry, *Glosule super Viaticum*, p. 202 ('fetidas dispositiones'). See, on a similar note, Ovid´s *Remedia amoris*, lines 299–356. On Ovid's writings on love being known in medieval Iceland, see Astrid Salvesen, 'Ovid', pp. 63–66.

[20] Gerard of Berry, *Glosule super Viaticum*, p. 203; Beecher and Ciavolella, 'Erotic Melancholy', pp. 69, 186. This is also the primary advice in Ovid´s *Remedia amoris*, where he recommends meeting other women (*Rem*. 441–44), distractions (*Rem*. 135–40, 197–200) and conversations about the lady's defects (*Rem*. 299–356).

[21] Heinrichs, 'Wenn ein König liebeskrank wird'. See, esp., pp. 37–44.

[22] *Morkinskinna*, vol. II, pp. 102–06. On the dating, see p. xvii in vol. I.

[23] *Morkinskinna*, vol. II, pp. 103–04. See also Kalinke, 'The Fictionalization of Fact', p. 161. For a reading that emphasises the 'friendship and the confidant relationship' between the king and Ívarr, see Harris, *Old Norse Studies*, pp. 105–06.

The text does not inform us whether the discussions were on the 'stinking disposition' of the lady, but after a few sessions, Ívarr has regained his health.

This *þáttr* is a fine example of the relevance of the context of lovesickness as detailed in Latin and other medieval texts, where it is placed within the masculine aristocratic realm. While the account undoubtedly serves to testify to King Eysteinn's generosity and wisdom, it also underlines the nobility of having detailed knowledge of lovesickness and its cure, while portraying the illness as a component of a prestigious modality of masculinity. By the application of this imagery to convey Egill's feelings of love, the otherwise aggressive Old Norse masculine ethic that Egill follows is adapted by incorporating medieval European ideas of lovesickness. Egill's emotional life is framed within a literary trope that brings connotations of masculine nobility. Thus, Egill's emotional vulnerability appears in a context that accentuates his place within the aristocratic realm, rather than undermines it.

3.3 Egill's melancholy

After Egill's wedding to Ásgerðr, many eventful years pass in the narrative before Þǫðvarr — Egill's most promising son, whom he loves dearly — drowns.[24] Characteristically, the whole account is narrated from an external perspective, and not a word is said about Egill's inner state. His feelings must be inferred from his actions and bodily expressions. While burying his son, Egill first swells up with grief so that his clothes tear off him: 'hann þrútnaði svá, at kyrtillinn rifnaði af honum ok svá hosurnar.'[25] Afterwards, he closes himself off and lies down in sorrow:

> gekk hann þegar til lokrekkju þeirar, er hann var vanr at sofa í; hann lagðisk niðr ok skaut fyrir loku; engi þorði at krefja hann máls. […] En eptir um daginn lét Egill ekki upp lokrekkjuna; hann hafði þá ok engan mat né drykk; lá hann þar þann dag ok nóttina eptir; engi maðr þorði að mæla við hann. En inn þriðja morgin, þegar er lýsti, þá lét Ásgerðr skjóta hesti undir mann, — reið sá sem ákafligast vestr í Hjarðarholt —, ok lét segja Þorgerði þessi tíðendi ǫll saman.[26]

[24] *Eg*, p. 243.
[25] *Eg*, p. 244. 'He swelled so much that his tunic tore off him, and his hose.'
[26] *Eg*, p. 243. 'He immediately went to the bed-closet he normally slept in; he lay down and locked the door; nobody dared to speak with him. […] But later in the day Egill did not open his bed-

Þorgerðr hastily rides without stopping to her father's house and arrives after nightfall. The intensely fast ride and the haste applied in calling for Þorgerðr's help when Ásgerðr realizes that Egill is not getting better, emphasize the gravity of his state. It also brings forth the notion that Þorgerðr possesses the means to heal her father. There are many examples of female doctors in Old Norse literature, as Jóhanna Katrín Friðriksdóttir recounts, and in the Old Norse legendary sagas and romances, 'healing appears as an aristocratic female activity.'[27] Yet, although Þorgerðr is described as 'vitr' (wise)[28] and having the knowledge to carve runes,[29] it is not explicitly stated in *Egils saga* that Þorgerðr possesses medical knowledge.

Descriptions of melancholy in medieval treatises include a feeling of fear along with deep sadness and mistrust. The main symptoms were a loss of appetite, sleeplessness, languor, idleness, and love of solitude, which Egill clearly exhibits in this scene.[30] The patient would often express deep despair and a wish to die, both of which are echoed in Egill's words to his daughter, Þorgerðr, on the third day: 'Hver ván er, at ek muna lifa vilja við harm þenna?'[31] According to the medieval medical literature, attempts to lift the spirit of the patient should be made, whether by conversation, encouragement, exhilaration, or diversion of the patient's mind. More powerful remedies were required if the condition was serious or chronic, such as medicaments and purging by bloodletting and vomiting.[32] In the case of *Egils saga*, Þorgerðr gently tricks her father into eating *sǫl* (dulse) and drinking milk, but the possible reasons for this choice of foodstuffs is discussed below (Section 3.3.1). She then encourages Egill to compose a poem. This results in the masterpiece *Sonatorrek*, in which he expresses his grief and anger towards the gods.

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closet, he also had no food nor drink, he lay there that day and the following night, nobody dared to speak with him. But the third morning, when it was light, Ásgerðr had a horse brought for a man — he rode as fast as he could west to Hjarðarholt — and had all these tidings told to Þorgerðr.'

[27] Jóhanna Katrín Friðriksdóttir, *Women in Old Norse Literature*, p. 31.

[28] *Eg*, p. 242.

[29] *Eg*, p. 245.

[30] Here, the accounts of the symptoms of melancholy in the Middle Ages are based on Jackson, *Melancholia*, pp. 46–64; Klibansky, Panofsky, and Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy*, pp. 67–123. See also Radden, *Nature of Melancholy*, pp. 3–14; Beecher and Ciavolella, 'Erotic Melancholy', pp. 63–65.

[31] *Eg*, p. 245. 'How can I be expected to want to live when I suffer such grief?'

[32] On medieval cures of melancholy, see, e.g., Jackson, *Melancholia*, pp. 50–59; Klibansky, Panofsky, and Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy*, p. 85.

The notion that melancholy was related to intellect and deep thought was transmitted in early and high medieval Latin treatises and encyclopaedic works[33] as well as the *Regimen sanitatis*.[34] This was mainly through Constantine the African's translation of Isḥāq ibn ʿImrān's (*c.* 900) treatise, *De melancholia*, which had much influence on the succeeding generations of thinkers and physicians.[35] Bouquet and Nagy trace how 'the way in which emotion was understood […] came to serve as a tool for social distinction', and that melancholy also 'became a marker of elite status'.[36]

As is characteristic for the melancholic state, in the first two stanzas of *Sonatorrek*, Egill speaks of how hard it is to express himself. As he communicates in the first verse, the words seem beyond his reach, hiding deep in his mind. The first two lines crystallize this: 'Mjǫk erum tregt | tungu at hrœra'.[37] This theme continues in the second stanza, where we additionally find a rare depiction of a male weeping:

> Esa auðþeystr
> þvít ekki veldr
> hǫfugligr,
> ór hyggju stað
> fagnafundr
> Þriggja niðja,
> ár borinn
> ór Jǫtunheimum[38]

[33] Such as the writings of Paul of Aegina on melancholy, appearing in Latin early in the Middle Ages, and the encyclopaedia of Bartholomeus Anglicus. See Jackson, *Melancholia*, pp. 54–55, 60–64. Rufus of Ephesus (first century CE) wrote that '[p]eople of excellent nature are predisposed to melancholy, since excellent natures move quickly and think a lot', *On Melancholy: Rufus of Ephesus*, ed. by Pormann, p. 47. See also the pseudo-Aristotelian *Problemata physica* 30.1, which connects melancholy with excellence and poetic abilities. Aristotle, *Problems*, 953a10–34.

[34] See Schuster and Völlnagel, 'Dürer and Rufus', pp. 212–15. For another variant of the poem expressing the same idea, see de Renzi's edition in *Collectio Salernitana*, vol. 1, p. 484.

[35] See Schuster and Völlnagel, 'Dürer and Rufus', p. 212. On this influence, see Toohey, 'Rufus of Ephesus and the Tradition of the Melancholy Thinker'. The Arabic and Latin treatises are published with a German translation in *Abhandlung über die Melancholie*, ed. by Garbers. English translations of selected parts are published in *On Melancholy: Rufus of Ephesus,* ed. by Pormann.

[36] Boquet and Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, pp. 142–43.

[37] *Eg*, p. 246. 'It is very arduous for me to move my tongue.'

[38] *Eg*, pp. 246–47. In this edition, Sigurður Nordal amends 'þriggia' as it stands in K to 'Friggjar', as does Finnur Jónsson in *Skj* I, p. 34. On this point, I follow Bergljót Kristjánsdóttir and Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir's edition, *Egils saga með formálum, viðaukum, skýringum og skrám*, p. 197.

> (It is not easily spurted out — heavy sobbing causes that — from the place of thought [> BREAST], the find cherished by Óðinn's descendants [> GODS > MEAD OF POETRY] that was carried long ago from the world of giants.)

Heavy, beclouding sobbing (*ekki hǫfugligr*) makes it difficult for him to articulate his thoughts and drag the poem from his breast. Interestingly, the word used for composing a poem is *þeysa*, which means to spurt or gush out. It is used once previously in the saga, in the context of Egill vomiting in the face of Ármóðr: 'þeysti Egill upp ór sér spýju mikla.'[39] This verb evokes imagery from the Old Norse myth on the origins of poetic craft in *Skáldskaparmál*, in which Óðinn regurgitates the poetic mead.[40] At the same time, purging through vomiting was considered an effective therapy for melancholy, and indeed, one can view the composition of the poem as a metaphorical purgative for Egill's grief. During the composition, he gradually begins to heal, as is noted in the prose: 'Egill tók að hressask, svá sem fram leið at yrkja kvæðit.'[41] When the poem is finished, Egill has completely recovered, the composition (vomiting) of the masterpiece purges the poet of his melancholy. Egill rises from his bed, gives the poem to his family, and returns to his rightful place at the high seat.

Þorgerðr has thus induced the purging of Egill's emotions, much in the same way as Guðrún Gjúkadóttir's induced weeping releases her swelling emotions of grief in *Guðrúnarkviða* I and prevents her from bursting. That was the unfortunate fate of the grief-swollen Besse in *Saga Óláfs konungs hins helga*, who could not release his grief through tears and thus died (see the beginning of Chapter 2).

The absolute helplessness that accompanies Egill's emotional anguish in this scene, which does not conform to the aggressive Viking masculine ethic, is thus mediated with imagery originating in learned ideas about the nature of melancholy. Read in this context, the scene manifests an adaptation of the aggressive, masculine ideal, an adaptation formed by incorporating elements of emotion practice associated

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[39] *Eg*, p. 226. 'Egill spurted out of himself a big gush of vomit.' On vomit and poetry in this scene, see de Looze, 'Poet, Poem and Poetic Process', p. 134.

[40] *Skáldskaparmál*, I, p. 5. This imagery conforms to the theme of Egill's relationship to Óðinn reverberating through the whole poem. See, e.g., de Looze, 'Poet, Poem and Poetic Process', pp. 134–35. Clunies Ross argues that Old Norse poets 'are represented as mimicking Óðinn's pseudo-procreative powers' by receiving the mead and by vomiting. See *History of Old Norse Poetry*, p. 93.

[41] *Eg*, p. 256. 'Egill started to get better as the composition of the poem progressed.'

with noble and outstanding masculine heroes from the non-native tradition, who were considered particularly prone to melancholy due to their excellence and prowess.

The case of Egill's emotional defencelessness, passivity, and helplessness represents an adaptation of the Old Norse aggressive masculine type by incorporating knowledge and literary tropes transmitted through non-native texts brought by the expansion of Latin Christendom to the north. At Egill's most vulnerable moments, his emotions are depicted by drawing on contemporary European cultural symbols and imagery from another masculine sphere, namely, royal and noble expressions of the feelings connected to black bile. Thus, Egill's display of his sufferings is aligned with those of kings and other noblemen. The association between Egill's vulnerability and his superior poetic skills and the imagery of noble melancholy applied in these scenes allow for a display of emotions that falls outside the constraints of the conventional model of aggressive masculinity. By drawing on the imagery of melancholy, Egill's masculinity is not undermined by his emotional defencelessness; rather, his helplessness becomes a positive trait through the artistic amalgamation of these modalities. This fusion generates a reinforcement of Egill's magnitude as a character by emphasizing his nobility, prestige, and intellect, resulting in the eventual augmentation of his masculine status.[42]

At the same time, the whole scene is a fine example of a vernacular literary text where imagery from the Latin tradition is appropriated in a creative fusion with the native tradition, creating a unique and powerful result. The non-native threads are both latent and palpable but are intricately spun with mythical connotations, exquisite poetry, and skilful and discerning characterization in a seamless compact web.

3.4 *Sǫl* and milk

Þorgerðr induces her father's purge by tricking him into eating *sǫl* and drinking milk. She goes to great lengths to cause him to consume these foods and carefully plans her deception of her father. After being urgently called to his house, she arrives in the

[42] While it is highly interesting, an analysis of Egill's loss of agency in his old age falls outside the emotional scope of this thesis. Indeed, Ármann Jakobsson associates it with learned Latin ideas of decrepitude and old age in 'The Specter of Old Age', pp. 317–21. See also Clover, 'Regardless of Sex', pp. 15–16, who explores (as Ármann) the effeminization that accompanies his decrepitude.

middle of the night, walks straight in, and speaks particularly loudly so that her father can hear from his bed-closet in which he has locked himself, and declares that she wishes to die with her father. Egill promptly opens the bed-closet for the first time in three days and lets Þorgerðr in, unsuspecting and grateful for her support:

> „mikla ást hefir þú sýnt við mik. Hver ván er, at ek muna lifa vilja við harm þenna?“ Síðan þǫgðu þau um hríð. Þá mælti Egill: „Hvat er nú, dóttir, tyggr þú nú nǫkkut?“ „Tygg ek sǫl,“ segir hon, „því at ek ætla, at mér muni þá verra en áðr; ætla ek ella, at ek muna of lengi lifa.“ „Er þat illt manni?“ segir Egill. „Allillt,“ segir hon, „viltu eta?“[43]

Þorgerðr plays on her father's wish to die and presents the *sǫl* as something akin to a suicide medicine. Egill takes it. Next, she asks for a drink, and water is brought to them in a drinking horn. Egill declares that the *sǫl* has made him thirsty and drinks heavily from the horn before realizing it does not contain water but milk.

> Þá beit Egill skarð ór horninu, allt þat er tennr tóku, ok kastaði horninu síðan. Þá mælti Þorgerðr: „Hvat skulu vit nú til ráðs taka? lokit er nú þessi ætlan. Nú vilda ek, faðir, at vit lengðim líf okkart, svá at þú mættir yrkja erfikvæði eptir Bǫðvar, en ek mun rista á kefli, en síðan deyju vit, ef okkr sýnisk.” […] Egill segir, at þat var þá óvænt, at hann myndi þá yrkja mega, þótt hann leitaði við, — „en freista má ek þess.“[44]

The elaborate deception Þorgerðr applies in the scene conveys her firm intention of getting her grief-stricken and melancholic father to consume this particular herb and this specific liquid with the purpose of bettering his mental state by inducing the release, or purging, of his grief in the form of a poem. The question arises as to why she would be convinced that *sǫl* and milk would particularly help with this.

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[43] *Eg*, pp. 243–44. '"You have shown me much love. How can I be expected to want to live when I suffer such grief?" Then they were silent for a while. Then Egill spoke: "What is it now, daughter, are you chewing something?" "I am chewing dulse", she says, "because I think it will make me feel worse than before; I think that otherwise I would live for too long." "Is it harmful for one?" Egill says. "Very harmful", she says, "do you want to eat it?"'

[44] *Eg*, p. 244. 'Then Egill bit a piece from the horn, all that his teeth could muster, and then threw the horn away. Then Þorgerðr spoke: "What shall we do now? Our intentions have been brought to an end. Now I would like, father, that we prolonged our lives, so that you may compose a commemorative poem about Bǫðvarr, but I will carve it on a rune-stick, and then we will die if we want." […] Egill says that it would be a surprise if he was able to compose now even if he attempted to, — "but I can try to do it."'

The immediate interpretation of this episode is that the purpose of giving Egill *sǫl* is simply to induce so much thirst that he succumbs to the irresistible urge to drink. That, then, would provide Þorgerðr with the opportunity to trick him into drinking milk, when he thinks he is offered water. Egill's angry reaction to that perhaps conveys his opinion that, as he has consumed the milk, his fast is ruined. Milk is a foundational source of nourishment, and Egill's reactions imply that it can be viewed as the equivalent of food in this scene. Milk is also what keeps newborn mammals alive and could thus be read as having a symbolic meaning as an emblematic liquid of life, strengthening Egill in his helpless and fragile condition. Milk is associated with feminine qualities, creation, nourishment, and care and is presented as healing for the wounded in *Fóstbrœðra saga*.[45]

Humoral medicine was based on the principles of opposites, as is explained, for instance, in *Epistula Vindiciani* and Isidore's *Etymologies*.[46] To regulate the predominance of black bile (a cold and dry condition), the *Epistula* recounts that one should apply remedies with the opposite qualities,[47] that is, medicaments and herbs with moist and hot qualities, along with a humidifying and heat-inducing diet.

Sǫl is red seaweed (*Palmaria palmata*) that grows on intertidal beach rocks in northern Europe and was widely used as food.[48] Its importance is mentioned in early Icelandic sources. *Sturlunga saga* tells of people in the twelfth century travelling a great distance across the country exclusively to buy *sǫl*,[49] and the law book *Grágás* has a clause on the penalty for harvesting *sǫl* from another's land.[50] Throughout the ages, seaweed has been used for food and medical purposes in various regions, including Ireland and Scotland.[51] In the Scottish highlands, *sǫl* was used for its purgative effects, among other things.[52] Being a northern plant, *sǫl* is not mentioned in the Old Norse translated medical books (see Section 2.2.3), which originate from the southern parts of Europe

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[45] *Fóst*, p. 273. A woman brings buckets of milk to wounded men after the battle at Stiklastaðir. The woman, who later turns out to be a doctor, speaks thus to Þormóðr: 'Þú munt vera sárr mjǫk, eða villtu drekka mjólk? Þat er sárum mǫnnum gott til styrkðar.' *Fóst*, p. 274. 'You must be badly wounded; do you want to drink some milk? It strengthens wounded men.'

[46] *Etym*. IV. iv.5; Vindicianus Afer, *Epistula ad Pentadium*, pp. 490–91. See also Section 2.2.1.3.

[47] Vindicianus Afer, *Epistula ad Pentadium*, pp. 490–91.

[48] See *Dictionary of Plant Sciences*, ed. by Allaby, p. 163. For use in Iceland, see Lúðvík Kristjánsson, *Íslenzkir sjávarhættir*, p. 84.

[49] Sturlunga saga, p. 17.

[50] *Grágás*, p. 350.

[51] See Mouritsen and others, 'On the human consumption of the red seaweed dulse'.

[52] See ibid.; Beith, *Healing Threads,* pp. 240–41.

where *sǫl* does not grow. These are the only preserved Old Norse medical books. As for the medicinal use of named and identified native Icelandic plants, medieval manuscript sources are extremely meagre and hardly mention any plant by name.[53] However, later folklore sources suggest that, for a long unspecified period, *sǫl* was considered to have medical effects in Iceland. An old Icelandic proverb states that 'hjartverk stilla hrá söl etin'.[54] Two eighteenth-century Icelandic learned treatises recount that, among *sǫl*'s known medicinal effects, it stimulates appetite, has purgative effects, and heats the body because of its salt. Therefore, it works against cold, bilious conditions,[55] which include the melancholic state. Both these late sources relate the heating medicinal effects of *sǫl* partly to its salt, and the Old Norse medical books indeed mention this effect of salt.[56]

As for milk, it is occasionally mentioned in Latin medical writings as having a wide variety of beneficial qualities, among them, humidifying and strengthening effects.[57] The Latin medical poem *Regimen sanitatis* (see Section 2.2.2.3) recommends milk for providing moisture to the body ('Humectat corpus hominis')[58] and strengthening the flesh. Milk is also recommended as a beneficial cure for melancholy in Pliny the Elder's influential encyclopaedic work *Historia naturalis*.[59]

The application of *sǫl* and milk as medicaments for Egill's melancholy conforms with the above conceptualizations of the medicinal effects of these foods. The *sǫl* would heat Egill's body and combat the black bile according to the principle of opposites. It

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[53] Sources on the use of native medical plants dating from the pre-reformation period (scattered mainly in sagas) are very scarce. See Lange, 'Lægeplanter'; Jón Steffensen, 'Alþýðulækningar'; Reichborn-Kjennerud, *Trolldomsmedisin*; Finnur Jónsson, *Lægekunsten*. None of these mention *sǫl*.

[54] Bjarni Pálsson, *Specimen observationum*, p. 27. 'Raw dulse eases heartache when eaten.' It is not clear what condition this refers to, possibly heartburn. See Reichborn-Kjennerud, *Vår gamle trolldomsmedisin*, vol. IV, p. 40.

[55] The treatises are *Specimen observationum*, by Bjarni Pálsson (d. 1779), the first surgeon general in Iceland, p. 27; and a book on herbal pharmacology by Reverend Björn Halldórsson from Sauðlauksdalr (d. 1794), *Grasnytjar*, p. 195.

[56] AM 434a 12mo, in *Den islandske lægebog,* ed. by Kålund, p. 35. AM 194 8vo, in *AÍ* I, p. 67. These clauses are derived, through Harpestræng, from Constantine's *De gradibus*, p. 387, which notes that mineralised salt (*Salis gemma*) is useful to reduce black bile in the body. Different types of salt could have slightly different effects. Similarly, Harpestræng's herbarium states that salt can combat coldness and dryness in the blood; see Harpestræng, *Gamle danske urtebøger*, p. 50.

[57] Demaitre, *Medieval Medicine*, pp. 228–30.

[58] *Collectio Salernitana*, vol. 5, p. 19. 'Moistens the human body.'

[59] Pliny, *Natural History*, p. 91 (Book 28, line 128).

would also have purgative effects. The milk would humidify and work to strengthen his physique. Yet, due to the lateness of the above post-medieval Norse sources, they do not provide an answer to whether this particular Latin medical knowledge was present in Iceland at the time of writing of *Egils saga*. However, the text of the saga itself communicates that Þorgerðr's choice of going to great lengths to make her father consume *sǫl* and milk reflects the notion that these would help with ridding her father of his potentially lethal grief. That her ultimate goal is to induce his composition of a poem about his loss further illustrates the necessity of expelling the swelling grief out of Egill's body. Þorgerðr's application of *sǫl* and milk thus demonstrates the conceptualization of deep sorrow and grief as emotions that need to be released or purged from the body, in this case, through the metaphorical 'vomiting' of the poem — his grief.

The whole account demonstrates the conceptualization of Egill's intense grief and melancholy, paired with the description of the swelling of Egill's body when he puts his dead son's body in the grave, as pressing from the inside, a force needing to come out if Egill is going to live. In the next chapter, such conceptualizations in bodily metaphors of emotions are explored further in relation to *Njáls saga*.

4 Coloured faces and swelling bodies

4.1 Hydraulic metaphors, container metaphors, and humoral theory

Njáls saga contains several scenes where the inner state of the characters is expressed by imagery that epitomizes emotions as a material force within the person that can fill her up and even overflow. In these scenes, emotions thrust their way outward from the inside of the body and manifest in reddening or another colour change, red patches on the skin, or swelling that distends the body and even breaks through and flows out in the form of pus, sweat, or gushing blood. In the saga, these kinds of physiological expressions are portrayed as involuntary reactions, and they sometimes occur much to the character's disapproval. They all convey negative emotions at points of high tension in the narrative, with anger and grief being the central feelings.

The philosopher Robert C. Solomon's conceptualization of a *hydraulic metaphor* of emotions is when the human psyche is seen 'as a ca[u]ldron of pressures demanding their release in action and expression'.[1] This imagery corresponds with what the cognitive linguistic Zoltán Kövecses defines as *container metaphors* of emotions; the

[1] Solomon, 'Getting Angry', p. 81; *Passions: Emotions and the Meaning of Life*, pp. 77–88.

conceptualization of human beings as containers and of emotions 'as some kind of substance (fluid or gas) inside the container'.[2]

To clarify the use of the word 'hydraulic' in this chapter, it is used in a broad sense, describing the conceptualization of emotions as 'pertaining to liquid conveyed through pipes or channels', relating to 'mechanical applications of a force acting upon or exerted by moving liquids'.[3] A 'container' relates to metaphors referring to the body as a container for such a hydraulic system.

As discussed in Chapter 2, it is to a large extent through ecclesiastical textual material that Latin ideas on the body and emotions were transmitted to medieval Iceland, and texts on the humoral theory are frequently woven into and compiled with theological writings. The religious literature belonging to this same Latin tradition is 'rich in hydraulic model imagery, especially Gregory, Isidore, Bede, and the anonymous Latin homilies and hagiographies', as Leslie Lockett points out.[4] Old Norse religious texts are no exception. Hydraulic metaphors are, for example, used to indicate the love of God or to portray the consequences of sinful behaviour — conditions that can be cured by turning to God. In an account of the Virgin Mary's miracles in *Maríu saga* (early thirteenth century),[5] the face and body of the slave Boso swell up so forcefully after he commits blasphemy that his eyes almost pop out, he loses his speech, and his inflated appearance makes him cease to look human. By repenting at the altar of St. Mary, Boso is

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[2] Kövecses, *Metaphor and Emotion*, p. 146. On the container metaphor, see pp. 146–63. Hydraulic metaphors for emotions in Anglo-Saxon literature have been thoroughly studied by Leslie Lockett. She uses the term 'hydraulic model', where the core features are heat, boiling, pressure, and heaviness of the breast, resembling 'the behaviour of a fluid in a closed container, which expands and presses outward against the walls […] threatening either to boil over or to burst the container'. Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, p. 5. Lockett identifies and analyses numerous examples of this in Anglo-Saxon prose and poetry. She argues the Anglo-Saxon hydraulic model was not only metaphorical but also a pre-Latin folk theory; see ibid., p. 109.

[3] *OED*, 'hydraulic' and 'hydraulics'.

[4] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, p. 108. See on works by Bede and Isidore in medieval Iceland in Section 2.2. An Old Norse translation of Gregory's *Dialogues* is among the oldest Old Norse manuscripts, AM 677 4to (c. 1200–1225), published in *AM 677 4to: Four Early Translations of Theological Texts,* ed. by Andrea de Leeuw van Weenen; *Leifar fornra kristinna frœða*, ed. by Þorvaldur Bjarnarson; *Heilagra manna søgur*, ed. by Unger. Of other works by Gregory the Great known in medieval Iceland, see 'Gregorius I papa' in *Islandia Latina*, ed. by Gottskálk Jensson.

[5] On the writing time, see, e.g., Turville-Petre, 'The Old Norse Homily on the Assumption and *Maríu Saga*', pp. 105–07. *Maríu saga* has a complicated history of manuscript transmission; see, e.g., Ásdís Egilsdóttir, Gunnar Harðarson, and Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir's introduction in *Maríukver: Sögur og kvæði af heilagri guðsmóður frá fyrri tíð*.

liberated from his sins by the grace of the Virgin, and his body returns to normal.[6] Likewise, by turning to God, one can prevent the dangers of swelling anger, as discussed in the Old Norse translation of Alcuin's *De virtutibus et vitiis* in the *Norwegian Homily Book* (AM 619 4to, *c.* 1200–1225) in a section on the vice of anger:

> En af þæirri ræiði ſprettr upp þrutnan hugar. þrættor [...] guðlaſtan. manndráp fiſi at hæfna.[7]

According to the homily, anger leads to the swelling of the mind that can have such grave consequences as blasphemy and homicide, but it can be soothed or prevented by God's help.[8] In the *Icelandic Homily Book* (Holm perg. 15 4to, *c.* 1200), the love of God is defined as a heat in the heart that pushes away earthly desires:[9]

> Þann fyllir andlegt vín, er hann þrútnar í ofmetnaði af lærdómi sínum. En svo verður drukkinn af Guðs víni, er hitnar í ást Guðs og gleymir jarðlegum hlutum, því meir skilur fleira af himneskum hlutum. [...] Hitni ást Guðs í hjörtum órum, svo að vér gleymim jarðlegum girndum.[10]

These representative examples, which are among the very earliest extant Old Norse texts, were brought to Old Norse culture by the emergence of Latin Christendom and form a part of a Latin knowledge structure on the body and emotions, as described in Section 2.1. The humoral theory is, in essence, an elaborate hydraulic model of the emotions. Indeed, Barbara Rosenwein notes that the hydraulic imagery found in medieval European literature 'in fact largely derives from medieval medical notions of the

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[6] *Mariu saga*, pp. 666–67.

[7] Alcuin, *De virtutibus et vitiis i norsk-islandsk overlevering*, p. 123. 'But from this anger springs the swelling of the mind, quarrels [...] blasphemy, manslaughter, desire for revenge.' On this manuscript and three others preserving this Old Norse translation, see Widding, 'Indledning', pp. 9–22.

[8] Alcuin, *De virtutibus et vitiis i norsk-islandsk overlevering*, p. 123.

[9] The sources for the homilies in the manuscript have been identified as the works of Bede, Gregory the Great, and Augustine, among others, though an extensive study has yet to be conducted; see McDougall, 'Homilies (West Norse)', p. 290.

[10] *Íslensk hómilíubók: Fornar stólræður*, p. 272. 'He who gets too full of spiritual wine swells in the haughtiness of his knowledge. But he who gets drunk on God's wine, heats up in his love for God and will forget earthly things, and will better understand divine things. [...] May the love of God heat up in our hearts, so that we will forget earthly desires.' In facsimile edition: *The Icelandic Homily Book: Perg. 15 4°*, fol. 89r.

humours',[11] and emotional examples of swelling in *Egils saga* and *Njáls saga* have been attributed to the influence of the humoral theory.[12]

Yet, it should be considered that features of the hydraulic imagery in Old Norse vernacular literature derive, at least in part, from vernacular conceptions of the body that predate the influx of Latin knowledge. Even though little is known about pre-Christian conceptions of the body and emotion in the Old Norse world — and the whole extant Old Norse manuscript corpus post-dates the conversion by at least two centuries — studies have shown that variants of hydraulic models can be found in non-Indo-European cultures around the world.[13]

Cognitive metaphor theory provides a framework to conceptualize this issue. As Lakoff and Johnson illustrate in their influential study in this field, *Metaphors We Live By*, metaphors in a language are based on knowledge structures that are a product of the interaction between culture-specific knowledge and cross-cultural shared human attributes.[14] That is, the fact that human bodies are essentially the same all around the world and across time can account for the similarity in emotion metaphors across distant cultures (for example, common human biology exists behind the physical sensation of heat and the increased heart rate following anger).[15] However, this occurs inextricably in interaction with culture-specific ideas, such as the knowledge, beliefs, values, and norms of each place and time, which is seen as accounting for culture-specific differences.[16]

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[11] Rosenwein, 'Worrying about Emotions in History', p. 834.
[12] Such as by Sif Rikhardsdottir, 'Medieval Emotionality', p. 80; Lönnroth, *Njáls Saga: A Critical Introduction*, p. 112; Lönnroth, 'Kroppen som själens spegel', pp. 49–50; Kirsi Kanerva, 'Disturbances of the Mind and Body', pp. 239–40.
[13] See examples from non-Indo-European cultures in Kövecses, 'Anger: Its Language', pp. 184–86. For diachronic examples, see Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, pp. 118–51. Hydraulic conceptions of emotions are far from universal; see Solomon, 'Getting Angry'; Lutz, 'The Domain of Emotion Words on Ifaluk'. On differences between such models between the Old English and medieval Irish, see Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, pp. 146–47.
[14] Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, pp. 19, 61–68.
[15] See Zoltán Kövecses, *Metaphor and Emotion*. Kövecses is a pioneer in the study of emotions and cognitive metaphors; see also 'Anger: Its Language'. For a response to the latter, see Geeraerts and Grondelaers, 'Looking Back at Anger'. Important cognitive studies on metaphors in literature include Lakoff and Turner, *More Than Cool Reason*; and Gibbs, *The Poetics of Mind*. The latter provides a survey of Lakoff and Johnson's work on metaphor and subsequent works.
[16] Kövecses, *Metaphor and Emotion*, pp. 154–81; Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, pp. 17–19.

Culture can be considered to filter what becomes used as a metaphor, to condition what it means and how significant it becomes.[17]

The main case studies of this dissertation, *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga*, were created at an intersection where various strands intertwine: the Latin learned and hagiographic, the continental chivalric, and the vernacular culture of poetry, myths, folklore, and oral transmission. As a unique literary genre, but yet a creative result of these various influences, it is reasonable to assume that the sagas represent a creative fusion of the interaction between vernacular and Latin ideas.[18] This is how the sagas are approached in the subsequent section, as this matter is considered in tandem with its main aim, which is more broadly to provide a literary analysis of the scenes in *Njáls saga* that include hydraulic emotional expressions and to survey the metaphor's deeper narrative function and significance.

4.2 Scenes including hydraulic metaphors in *Njáls saga*

Six scenes in *Njáls saga* that include hydraulic imagery in the depiction of emotions are analysed here. They all appear in the saga's prose. The scenes have in common that few or no emotion words are employed in them. Additionally, it is often noted that someone becomes silent, and both of these things work to accentuate the force of the hydraulic metaphors. Four of these scenes punctuate the escalation towards the burning of Bergþórshváll and its aftermath; thus, how the metaphors operate not only as a signifier of the emotions of particular characters but also with larger connotations on multiple narrative levels is analysed here. Pivotal scenes in *Njáls saga* are marked by the use of such metaphors for emotions, which can be viewed as symbols of the saga's broader narrative dynamics.

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[17] See Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, p. 19; Gibbs, 'Taking Metaphor Out of Our Heads', p. 155.

[18] An investigation of Old Norse psychologies, pre- and post-Christian, could yield highly interesting results. There are for example indications of differences in bodily metaphors used in religious writings compared to sagas and skaldic poetry, and between older and younger material. Such a study would need to consist of a wide comparative study based on the whole Old Norse textual corpus of prose and poetry. Indeed, Colin Mackenzie addresses this topic in his doctoral thesis, 'Vernacular Psychologies', where he compares Old English and Old Norse psychologies. However, his conclusions and generalisations in the Old Norse part would, in my opinion, require a less selective body of textual evidence and the support of a more contextual analysis.

Though it is one of the minor examples, the powerful chieftain, Hǫskuldr Dala-Kollsson is the first character in the saga to be depicted physically as brimming with emotion. He is the father of Hallgerðr, one of the most complex and fateful female characters in *Njáls saga*. Hǫskuldr is exposed as behaving dishonourably when he refuses to pay compensation for the killing of Hallgerðr's husband, a killing that was effectively induced by Hallgerðr herself. As her father, Hǫskuldr is both liable for the compensation and partly responsible for this harmful turn of events. He married Hallgerðr off without her consent to this man whom she viewed as less prestigious than she deserved. He also did this without consulting his brother Hrútr, Hallgerðr's uncle.[19] Of his own accord, Hrútr steps in to prevent harm to Hǫskuldr's (and Hallgerðr's) reputation and offers generous compensation for the killing:

> „ok mun ek ekki hlífa þér í gerðinni því ef satt skal um tala, þá hefir dóttir þín ráðit honum banann." Þá setti Hǫskuld dreyrrauðan ok mælti ekki nǫkkura hríð.[20]

No emotion words are used in this scene, we only see Hǫskuldr's feelings bulge up in his appearance in the form of blood rushing to his face. The silence that accompanies the physical expression serves to accentuate the effects of his feelings pressing their way outwards. Hǫskuldr's bodily reactions reflect shameful anger and further demonstrate his inner struggle when his honour is challenged, and his attention is drawn to his own liability in the tragic outcome.

In the escalation towards the burning and in its aftermath, hydraulic emotional imagery assumes a greater role, signifying not only the inner feelings of the characters but also the larger context of the underlying tension in the narrative. An intense inner struggle and a constellation of emotions are at play when Flosi Þórðarson from Svínafell is put in an impossible situation and is caught between a fierce challenge to his honour and masculinity on one hand, and the risk of terrible bloodshed on the other, in the intensification of the events leading to the death of Njáll and his people by burning. The saintly figure of Hǫskuldr *Hvítanessgoði* has been killed by the sons of Njáll. Hǫskuldr's

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[19] As Miller notes regarding this scene, marriage arrangements were family matters because they concerned the liability of kinsmen; see *Why Is Your Axe Bloody?*, p. 42. After these events, Hǫskuldr consults his brother on Hallgerðr's marriage matters.

[20] *Nj*, p. 39. '"And I will not spare you in the settlement, for if truth shall be told, your daughter has killed him." Then Hǫskuldr became red as blood and did not speak for a while.'

widow, Hildigunnr Starkaðardóttir, forcefully whets Flosi — who is her nearest male relative, her late father's brother — to exact blood vengeance in a climactic scene that is also one of the richest examples of female whetting in the *Íslendingasǫgur*.[21]

Flosi has planned to prosecute the case by law and has, just before arriving at Hildigunnr's farm, had a conversation with his ally about the importance of taking the course that leads to the least trouble.[22] Hildigunnr has carefully planned her whetting; she has kept the cloak that Hǫskuldr was slain in, with his blood in it. When Flosi has enjoyed a meal at her farm, Hildigunnr silently pours Hǫskuldr's blood over Flosi. She then performs a powerful ritual-like speech where she invokes Flosi's Christ, appeals to his notions of manliness and courage, and challenges him to take vengeance or lose his honour.[23] Flosi's inner state in reaction to this is described with a string of colour changes in his face, with striking similes:

> Flosa brá svá við, at hann var í andliti stundum rauðr sem blóð, en stundum fǫlur sem gras [aska, nár],[24] en stundum blár sem hel.[25]

The dramatic similes used to describe Flosi's face connote a sense of cataclysmic doom. Blood, ash, corpse, and *hel* evoke a reference to death, harm, destruction, and annihilation. Viewing Flosi's display in the scope of the Latin humoral schema, the fluids in his body would be understood as alternately flowing from the heart to his skin and back towards the heart, which indicates a rush of forceful feelings. As explained in Section 2.1.1, according to the humoral model, the emotions were thought to cause somatic modifications that caused the blood and vital spirits in it to move either from the heart to the limbs and skin (centrifugal) or towards the heart (centripetal), depending on the emotion. Anger was thought to be centrifugal and, thus, to cause heat

[21] *Nj*, pp. 289–92.
[22] *Nj*, p. 289.
[23] This scene and the performative and ritual nature of the expression of Hildigunnr's emotions is discussed in Section 6.2.1.
[24] 'Gras' (grass) in R and M; 'aska' (ash) in Gráskinna (Gks 2870 4to, *c*. 1290–1310); 'nár' (corpse) in Kálfalækjarbók (AM 133 fol., *c*. 1300); see *Njála*, ed. by Konráð Gíslason and Eiríkur Jónsson, p. 595.
[25] *Nj*, p. 292. 'Flosi was so taken aback, that his face sometimes turned red as blood, sometimes pale as grass [ash, corpse], but sometimes dark-blue as *hel*.'

and reddening in appearance, while fear was considered centripetal and would manifest as a pallor on the skin.[26]

As Kirsten Wolf's account of facial expressions in over one hundred examples from *Íslendingasǫgur* and *þættr* shows, no complete one-to-one relationship between a particular colouration of the face and a certain emotion exists in *Íslendingasǫgur*.[27] While the strongest correlation seems to be between anger and turning red,[28] it is sometimes equivocal, such as when Guðrún turns red as blood when Gestr interprets her dreams in *Laxdœla saga*[29] and in *Gísla saga Súrssonar*, when Vésteinn flushes upon receiving Gísli's half-coin and realizes it fits with his own half.[30] In these cases, the reddening is unlikely to signify anger but rather an ambiguous, yet powerful, stirring of the mind.

Turning pale (*fǫlr*, *bleikr*, *at blikna*) is treated as a marker of fear in various genres of Old Norse literature, such as in the *Third Grammatical Treatise,* where it says that 'er bleikr kallaðr hræddr, þvíat bliknan kemr eptir hræzlu'.[31] In *Karlamagnús saga,* a chieftain 'flýr nú sem skjótast […] bleikr ok huglauss'[32] and the giant Hymir in *Gylfaginning* 'fǫlnaði, ok hræddisk'[33] when he sees Miðgarðsormr. In a scene in *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar en mesta,* the slave Karkr turns pale (after first turning black) from

[26] See Section 6.2.1 and Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, pp. 212–16. Boquet and Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, pp. 136–38.
[27] Wolf, 'Somatic Semiotics', pp. 132–38. While I do not agree with some of Wolf's assertions of what emotions are being displayed (such as Flosi's paleness as indisputably being a sign of anger) and find it often much more ambiguous than she does, her account of examples of colour change from the corpus is extensive.
[28] I agree on this point with Wolf; see ibid., p. 135. This might in part be explained by anger and reddening often being named together in scenes where royal anger is displayed, such as in *Eg*, p. 29, where King Haraldr hárfagri 'roðnaði ok mælti ekki, ok þóttusk menn finna, at hann var reiðr' ('turned red and did not speak, and men assumed that he was angry'). On royal anger, see Section 1.3.1. This assumption correlates with the examples Wolf cites ('Somatic Semiotics', pp. 135–36), although she does not discuss royal anger in her essay.
[29] *Laxdœla saga*, p. 91.
[30] *Gísla saga*, p. 40.
[31] Óláfr Þórðarson, *Málhljóða- og málskrúðsrit*, p. 78. 'Pale is called fearful, because paleness follows fear.' Composed *c*. 1250; see Raschellà, 'Grammatical Treatises', p. 237.
[32] *Karlamagnus saga ok kappa hans*, p. 352 (Chapter 101); 'flees as quickly as possible […] pale and faint-hearted.' The saga is a collection of texts about Charlemagne, estimated to have been translated into Old Norse in the thirteenth century, with manuscript witnesses ranging from *c*. 1250 to 1450; see Skårup, 'Karlamagnús saga', p. 349.
[33] Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Prologue and Gylfaginning*, p. 45. 'Paled and became frightened.'

intense fear.[34] However, in *Fóstbrœðra saga,* paleness (*bliknan*) is referred to as signifying hatred ('eigi bliknaði hann því at honum lagði eigi heift í brjóst')[35] and in courtly literature, such as the translated *lais* in *Strengleikar*, many examples of paleness indicate the intricate feelings accompanying lovesickness, which can be despair and fear in addition to being the manifestation of a feeble state.[36]

The simile to *hel* in the description of Flosi's face connotes a sense of doom, and the depiction of his red and pale colours are most likely to signify anger and fear. This is further supported by his furious words to Hildigunnr after he has thrown the bloody cloak back at her: 'Þú ert it mesta forað ok vildir, at vér tœkim þat upp, er ǫllum oss gegnir verst, ok eru kǫld kvenna ráð.'[37] These words, of course, along with his aggressive gesture, express intense rage aroused by his manhood and honour being challenged in a humiliating way. His fear is communicated by his knowledge that, should he exact blood vengeance, it will have grave consequences. Later, contemplating with his friend what to do, he explains that Njáll and his sons are so powerful and high-born that, should they be killed, their killers would have to beg for mercy at the knees of the other chieftains.[38]

It seems clear that Flosi is caught in a struggle between his honour and the terrifying ramifications of vengeance, and this is vividly shown on his face. After his encounter with Hildigunnr, he seems to only half-heartedly follow the course of settling the case by law. He effectively undermines the reconciliation by responding aggressively to Njáll's gift of a *silkislœður* (silk garment) on top of the huge compensation fee for Hǫskuldr's death.[39] Flosi chooses to interpret the gift as an insult, thereby initiating an exchange of verbal offences that ruin the closure of the settlement.[40]

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[34] *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar en mesta*, vol. 1, p. 235. The saga was probably composed in the early fourteenth century and modelled on older sources; see Ólafur Halldórsson, 'Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar', p. 449.

[35] *Fóst*, pp. 127–28. 'He did not pale because he had no hatred in his breast.'

[36] See, e.g., *Guiamars saga* in *Strengleikar*, p. 24. Also, two ambiguous examples of paleness exist in *Laxdœla saga* and *Þórðar saga hreðu*; see Wolf, 'Somatic Semiotics', pp. 132–33.

[37] *Nj*, pp. 291–92. 'You are the worst monster; you want us to do what will lead to the worst things for us all, and cold are the counsels of women.'

[38] *Nj*, p. 294.

[39] *Nj*, p. 312.

[40] This view assumes that Njáll's gift of the silk garment is not ill-intentioned, and that Flosi's over-sensitive reactions are unjustified (such a gift was highly treasured by Egill Skalla-Grímsson, *Eg*., pp. 213, 274, who even wrote poetry about it). See also Miller, *Why Is Your Axe Bloody?*,

These are complex and intense feelings that are depicted by Flosi's rapid change of colour and are a constellation of strong, negative emotions that have the force of expanding and pressing outward to his face and constricting from it. In the legendary saga *Ragnars saga loðbrókar* (*c.* 1230),[41] this motif appears when a somewhat analogous inner conflict seems to take place within Ívarr Ragnarsson. Upon hearing of the circumstances under which his father has been slain, Ívarr changes colour and additionally swells up:

> litr hans var stundum raudr, enn stundum blar, enn lotum var hann bleikr, ok hann var sva þrutinn, at hans haurund var allt blasit af þeim grimleik, er i briosti hans var.[42]

Ívarr's physical reactions indicate that he is experiencing profound and conflicting emotions. He does not want to take immediate vengeance for his father's death but makes a longer-term plan to avenge, even though his brothers fiercely claim that such apparent lenient reactions are a disgrace.

4.3 Repression

The saga does not indicate that Flosi is embarrassed about his colourful physical emotional display. In other cases in *Njáls saga*, readers are informed that these kind of expressions are quite against the intentions of characters who are striving to repress the somatic depiction of their intense feelings.

In the aftermath of the burning, chieftains and their supporters ride to the Althing where the burners will be prosecuted. On their way, Flosi and the one hundred

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pp. 216–18. For a discussion of alternative views, see Ármann Jakobsson, 'Masculinity and Politics in *Njáls saga*', p. 199.

[41] See McTurk, 'Ragnars saga loðbrókar', p. 519. The oldest fragment is from the thirteenth century.

[42] *Vǫlsunga saga ok Ragnars saga loðbrókar*, p. 162. 'His colour was sometimes red, but sometimes dark-blue; at times he was pale, and he was so swollen that his skin bulged from the fierceness in his breast.' There is also a string of colour change to be found in *Tóka þáttr Tókasonar*, preserved in the late fourteenth-century Flateyjarbók as a part of a version of *Óláfs saga helga*. At the court of Hrólfr kraki, Bǫðvarr bjarki is threatened by Tóki and reacts: 'stundum var hann rauðr sem blod en stundum bleikr sem bast edr blarr sem hel edr fǫlr sem narr suo at ymsir þesser litir færduzst j hann suo bra honum vid.' *Flateyjarbok: En Samling af norske Konge-Sagaer*, p. 136. 'Sometimes he was red as blood, but sometimes pale as bast or dark-blue as *hel*, or pale as a corpse.' Compare also *Fóstbrœðra saga* where the absence of these colours is noted in the appearance of Þorgeirr Hávarsson, explained by his bloodless heart, pp. 127–28.

burners stop by at the farm of Ásgrímr Elliða-Grímsson.[43] Ásgrímr's daughter was married to one of Njáll's sons, and he is thus on Njáll's side. It is Flosi who proposes the visit, with the intention of provoking Ásgrímr by paying him an unwelcome visit in a type of a 'ritualized imposition, overtly hostile', as Miller notes.[44] Ásgrímr, however, does not want to give them the satisfaction, and when he sees the group approaching and laughing light-heartedly, he decides to keep his grace and receive them honourably and suppress his hostility and rage. He carefully prepares his house and has a generous meal laid out for the men upon their arrival. However, Ásgrímr's body gives his feelings away: 'Ásgrímr þagði um matmálit ok var svá rauðr á at sjá sem blóð.'[45] Here, silence is noted as Ásgrímr's emotions force their way to his face, which becomes as red as blood. As the scene progresses, further tension builds up when Flosi behaves indifferently and haughtily, until Ásgrímr cannot control himself any longer. Suddenly, he grabs a wood-axe, leaps at Flosi, and swings the axe at his head. Flosi's men grab Ásgrímr, and no harm is done. Here, the outlet of the hostile rage, boiling up in Ásgrímr's body against his will, is violence.

In a similar way, earlier in the saga, Skarpheðinn masks his own furious inner state by belittling his mother's rage, but his body gives his feelings away.[46] The scene starts by Bergþóra angrily whetting her sons to avenge the insult of being called dung-beardlings. She challenges their manliness by implying that they are no match for the hero Gunnarr Hámundarson. Skarpheðinn calmly remarks that he, in contrast to his mother, does not become mad at everything, as women do. However, the reader is made well aware that Skarpheðinn is seething with rage; it distends to his face, which develops red patches, and it even bulges out of his body in the form of sweat on his forehead: 'spratt honum sveiti í enni, ok kómu rauðir flekkar í kinnr honum.'[47] Skarpheðinn, too, takes violent action after this hydraulic display of emotions, although in a more calculated and successful way than Ásgrímr. That same night, he heads out with his brother for vengeance. This calculated violent expression of rage forms a part of an emotive script and an honourable type of emotional practice, discussed in Chapter 7.

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[43] *Nj*, p. 136.
[44] Miller, *Why Is Your Axe Bloody?,* p. 257.
[45] *Nj*, p. 361. 'Ásgrímr was silent during the meal, and as red in his appearance as blood.'
[46] *Nj*, p. 114.
[47] *Nj*, p. 115. 'Sweat came out on his forehead and red patches came onto his cheeks.' More aspects of this scene are discussed in Section 6.3.1.

This leads us to the curious case of Þórhallr Ásgrímsson (son of Ásgrímr Elliða-Grímsson), who is especially prone to displaying bodily signs of emotions in a hydraulic manner, more than any other character in the saga. Þórhallr is described as a valiant man, big and very strong, with dark hair and skin, who is moderate in his speech, yet hot-tempered.[48] Njáll fostered Þórhallr at a young age and taught him law so that he became one of the greatest lawyers in Iceland, and Þórhallr is said to have loved Njáll more dearly than his own father.[49] When Þórhallr receives the news that Njáll has been burnt to death, his reactions are noteworthy both in their extremity and their physicality:

> hann þrútnaði allr ok blóðbogi stóð ór hvárritveggju hlustinni, ok varð eigi stǫðvat, ok fell hann í óvit, ok þá stǫðvaðisk.[50]

This scene has no parallel in the Old Norse literature.[51] Þórhallr's bodily reactions are grotesque — even 'baroque-style'.[52] His emotions are so forceful that the build-up of outward pressure expands his body and then gushes out of it with such a force that the jet from each ear resembles the form of a bow. The stream is so uncontrollable that his friend's strivings to stop it are of no use. The bleeding comes to a halt only by Þórhallr passing out.

Since the ears are mentioned as the exit of the blood, and according to medieval medical literature, the ears were the exit of red/yellow bile, Lars Lönnroth has contended that this scene 'suggests that the author of *Njála* was familiar with medieval medical theory; the stream of blood may be a sign that the sudden fury has caused Þórhallr's gall

[48] *Nj*, pp. 279, 359.
[49] *Nj*, p. 74.
[50] *Nj*, p. 344. 'His whole body swelled up, and a blood-bow spurted out of both his ears and this could not be stopped; he fainted, and then it stopped.'
[51] As for medieval Irish literature, the mythological hero Cú Chulainn undergoes grotesque bodily transformations in his battle-frenzy, which includes blood streaming from the top of his head; see Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, p. 146. In *ONP Registre*, nine examples of 'blóðbogi' occur in other Old Norse works, but in all cases, this refers to the consequences of a physical external injury (by battle, a dragon attack, or phlebotomy). Three cases of 'bogi' in *ONP Registre* are used to describe a jetting liquid (from a finger, a cup, and by phlebotomy), but none of them are parallel to the scene in *Njáls saga*.
[52] Einar Ól. Sveinsson, 'Formáli', p. ccxxii.

fluid to seek its "natural" exit through his ears'.[53] In response, Peter Hallberg maintained that this was an 'absurd' idea and pointed out that, according to Latin learned texts, it was gall (that is, red/yellow bile), not blood, that had its exit through the ears. The secretion should thus have been some other substance, perhaps ear-wax.[54] Lönnroth answered by pointing out that, in the Old Norse treatise *Af natturu mannzins ok bloði*, the word *bloð* (blood) is used as a term for both bile and blood.[55] He concluded that it seemed 'most probable that this specific version of the humoral theory was known to the author of *Njála*'.[56] By the same token, Kirsi Kanerva recently suggested that the author 'wished to apply humoral theory as its principles were understood in Iceland and implied that Þórhallr had a choleric temperament'.[57]

First, it does not seem self-evident that what Þórhallr is feeling is fury and is thus choleric and suffering from the accumulation of red/yellow bile. Rather, the centrality of grief must be considered. As quoted above, Þórhallr is said to have loved Njáll more dearly than his own father.[58] Second, the treatise *Af natturu mannzins ok bloði* does not include any special or radically different version of the humour theory than the prevailing contemporary one. As discussed in Section 2.2.2.2, the theory assumed that the bloodstream in the veins was the carrier of all four humours in a mixture.[59] Because of this, various types of imbalance between the humours could be corrected, for example, by phlebotomy (drawing blood from the veins in the different parts of the body),[60] even though the humours had different origins in the body and different qualities. There is thus no paradox in connecting Latin medical literature to the blood gushing out of Þórhallr's ears.

Peter Hallberg's firm dismissal of any influence of the humoral theory on this scene seems unnecessarily pedantic. As has been argued in this dissertation, there is evidence of knowledge of the theory in Iceland at the time of writing of *Njáls saga*, and

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[53] Lönnroth, *Njáls Saga: A Critical Introduction*, p. 112. Lönnroth also argued for this earlier in 'Kroppen som själens spegel', pp. 49–50.
[54] Hallberg, 'Lars Lönnroth: Studier i Olaf Tryggvasons saga etc.', pp. 170–71. Quote on p. 171.
[55] See a discussion on the treatise in Section 2.2.2.
[56] Lönnroth, *Njáls Saga: A Critical Introduction*, p. 112 n8.
[57] Kanerva, 'Disturbances of the Mind and Body', p. 239.
[58] *Nj*, p. 74.
[59] See Nutton, 'Humoralism', p. 287; Cook, 'Physical Methods', pp. 942–44.; Geeraerts and Grondelaers, 'Looking Back at Anger', pp. 158, 164, and Lonie, *The Hippocratic Treatises*, p. 47.
[60] On bloodletting and other humoral cures, see Section 2.1, (especially 2.1.1 and 2.2.1).

its influence has been demonstrated in other *Íslendingasǫgur*.[61] The scene is in accordance with Latin conceptualizations of the physiology of emotions, where vital spirits are described as rushing from the heart to the limbs as an extreme emotional reaction to a tragic event, causing Þórhallr's fainting and the physical overflow of his forceful feelings before his reason can intervene.

As in the case of Ásgrímr and Skarpheðinn, it is evident that this happens to Þórhallr involuntarily and in addition it is clearly against his approval:

> Eptir þat stóð hann upp ok kvað sér lítilmannliga verða, — „ok þat munda ek vilja, at ek hefnda þessa á þeim, er hann brenndu inni, er nú hefir mik hent." Þeir sǫgðu, at engi mundi virða honum þetta til skammar, en hann kvað ekki mega taka fyrir þat, hvat menn mælti.[62]

Þórhallr's emotional reactions are something that 'happen to' him, that he cannot control or repress, although he clearly wants to, and he is worried that his manliness has diminished by such extreme uncontrollable reactions. He feels ashamed and embarrassed.

This is not the last time in the saga that Þórhallr's body behaves in an unruly fashion. His leg swells at a high-tension build-up point in the saga when Flosi and his crew are about to be tried for the burning at the Althing:

> Þórhallr Ásgrímsson tók fótarmein svá mikit, at fyrir ofan ǫkkla var fótrinn svá digr ok þrútinn sem konulær, ok mátti hann ekki ganga nema við staf.[63]

Because of this, he stays in his booth while the case is tried. Speaking to his father, he emphasizes the importance of restraint and composure during the proceedings, but no sooner has he said this than his body reveals his own turbulent inner state:

> Þeir Ásgrímr litu til hans, ok var andlit hans at sjá sem á blóð sæi, en stórt hagl hraut ór augum honum; hann bað fœra sér spjót sitt.[64]

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[61] Such as in Jónas Kristjánson's analysis of *Fóstbrœðra saga* in *Um Fóstbrœðrasögu*, pp. 240–46.
[62] *Nj*, p. 344–45. 'Afterwards he stood up and said that this was unmanly, — "and I would like to take revenge for what has now happened to me, against those men who burned him." They said that nobody would view this as a disgrace for him, but he said that he could not stop people from speaking.'
[63] *Nj*, p. 359. 'Þórhallr Ásgrímsson got an ailment in his leg, so grave that his leg above the ankle was as swollen as a woman's thigh, and he could not walk unless he had a cane.'

Þórhallr's bodily reactions emphasize the tension in the scene through hydraulic imagery of his emotions; they bulge up in his face and are shown by reddening, and they overflow through his eyes in the form of hail. The hail that springs from Þórhallr's eyes is conspicuous. A handful of other examples exist of characters crying hail in Old Norse literature. *Víga-Glúms saga*, which is classified as an early saga (*c.* 1220–1250),[65] describes such hail coming from the eyes of Víga-Glúmr when he entered a battle mood: 'setti at honum hlátr […] hann gerði fǫlvan í andliti, ok hrutu ór augum honum tár þau, er því váru lík sem hagl, þat er stórt er.'[66] Gizurr Þorvaldsson cries tears of hail when gazing at the dead bodies of his wife and son who were burnt to death in Flugumýrarbrenna, a reaction that foreshadows his revenge.[67] In the thirteenth-century legendary saga, *Ragnars saga loðbrókar*, Áslaug (the daughter of Sigurðr *Fáfnisbani* and Brynhildr) cries tears 'sem blod veri aliz, enn hart sem haglkornn' upon receiving the news of the slaying of her stepson.[68] In all those cases, the hail foreshadows aggression or violence, and thus stands as a vivid symbol for feelings of spite or aggressive anger, combined with grief or sadness.

In Christian imagery of the Middle Ages, crying was a complex and multifaceted symbol, often considered the overflowing of true feelings in the form of a bodily humour.[69] An anonymous English homily from the twelfth century categorizes 'tears like snow water' as tears of compassion and remorse on behalf of others.[70] While *Njáls saga*

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[64] *Nj*, p. 378. 'Ásgrímr and the others looked at him, and his face was like blood in appearance, but big hail sprung from his eyes; he asked for his spear to be brought to him.'
[65] Vésteinn Ólason, 'Family Sagas', p. 115. The oldest manuscript is Möðruvallabók (AM 132 fol.), *c*. 1350.
[66] *Víga-Glúms saga*, p. 26. 'Laughter came upon him […] he became pale in the face, and from his eyes fell tears which were like hail, those which are big.'
[67] *Sturlunga saga*, p. 642.
[68] *Ragnars saga loðbrókar* in *Vǫlsunga saga ok Ragnars saga loðbrókar*, p. 142. 'As if it were blood to look at, but hard as a hailstone'. Tears of hail upon receiving grave news are also mentioned in at least three medieval Icelandic romances: in the early fourteenth-century romance *Mágus saga jarls* (in *Fornsögur Suðrlanda*, p. 19) and in the fifteenth-century *Sigrgarðs saga frækna* (in *Late Medieval Icelandic Romances*, vol. 4, p. 75) and *Vilhjálms saga sjóðs*, where, in both the latter cases, it is noted that the hail is red as blood. In *Vilhjálms saga sjóðs*, this refers to manuscript AM 577 4to, 41r (c. 1450–1499); see 'hagl' in *ONP Registre*. This variant is not included in the published edition of the saga in *Late Medieval Icelandic Romances*, vol. 5, which is based on AM 343 a 4to.
[69] An excellent account of the symbolism of crying in the Medieval West is found in *Crying in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Gertsman.
[70] On snow tears, see ibid., p. xii. Furthermore, the tears of the sinners in inferno were frozen in 'Canto XXXIII' in Dante's *La Divina Commedia*; see Boitani, 'Inferno XXXIII'.

has a great deal of Christian imagery,[71] in this case, it is preferable to consider the tears of hail in light of the Old Norse kennings for tears, since they are mentioned in *Skáldskaparmál* in Snorri's recommendations on the names of Freyja and kennings for gold:

> Til allra heita Freyju er rétt at kenna grátinn ok kalla svá gullit, ok á marga lund er þessum kenningum breytt, kallat hagl eða regn eða él eða dropar eða skúrir eða forsar augna hennar eða kinna eða hlýra eða brá eða hvarma.[72]

Additionally, a similar description is found in one manuscript of *Snorra-Edda*, Codex Wormianus (*c.* 1340–1370), in a section on tears not found in other manuscripts of the work, as Guðrún Nordal points out:[73]

> Graat eða tár má kalla hagl eða él regn eða dropa skurer eða forsar augna eða kinna hlyra eða brá eða huarma.[74]

Although no preserved examples exist of tears referred to as hail in the corpus of skaldic poetry, hail is used in kennings for weapons and in battle imagery, functioning to emphasize aggressiveness and force.[75] Hail is hard, cold, and aggressive, and thus insinuates an agitated, hateful, angry feeling of sadness in the context of tearful emotions, which would motivate action and revenge. Fittingly, Þórhallr asks for his spear immediately after he cries tears of hail.

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[71] See Section 7.3.4. The manifestation of Christian themes in *Njáls saga* and its Christian narrative elements have long been recognised, and numerous studies have been conducted on the subject. For recent studies, see, e.g., Grønlie, *The Saint and the Saga Hero*; and Sävborg, 'Konsten att läsa sagor'. Older key works include Turville-Petre, *Origins of Icelandic Literature*; and Lönnroth, *Njáls Saga: A Critical Introduction*. See also a recent research overview in Haki Antonsson, 'Christian Themes'. On Christian motifs in *Egils saga*, see, e.g., Torfi H. Tulinius, *Skáldið í skriftinni*.

[72] Snorri Sturluson, *Skáldskaparmál*, p. 44. 'By all the names for Freyja it is proper to qualify crying, and refer to gold, and these kennings vary in many ways, it is called hail or rain or snow-showers or drops or showers or waterfalls of her eyes or cheeks or jowls or brows or eyelids.'

[73] Guðrún Nordal, *Tools of Literacy*, pp. 246–47. See also ibid., pp. 294–96 on kennings for tears and crying.

[74] Snorri Sturluson, *Edda Snorra Sturlusonar: Codex Wormianus AM 242, fol.*, p. 112. 'Crying or tears can be called hail or snow-shower, rain or drops, showers or waterfalls of the eyes or cheeks, jowls or brows, or eyelids.'

[75] Many such examples can be found, such as Þorkell Gíslason, *Búadrápa* 9, *SkP* I, p. 949; Einar Skúlason, *Ingadrápa* 3, *SkP* II, pp. 564–65; Hallfreður vandræðaskáld, *Hákonardrápa* 3, *SkP* III, p. 218; etc.

4.4 The function of hydraulic metaphors in *Njáls saga*

Þórhallr's icy tears symbolize the overflow of his emotions through his eyes, emotions of grief and agitation, ones that foreshadow revenge. When it turns out that the case is ruined, and the burners will not be sentenced, Þórhallr falls completely silent. He then jumps to his feet, grabs his spear, and drives it through his ailing leg, letting out all the pus and blood that flows in a stream across the floor. He walks briskly without a limp straight to the enemy's camp and effectively commences the battle by killing the first man.[76] While Lönnroth views the body of Þórhallr as primarily reflecting his inner state,[77] Miller argues that the allegorical behaviour of his body is meant to 'embody the entire polity' of a society that is 'about to burst the seams of its limited institutionalized restraints'.[78] Yet, when the bodily hydraulic metaphors for emotions are looked on as a whole in the saga, they go beyond both these points and can be viewed as operating on at least three levels.

The first is the personal level, where the metaphors depict the characters' inner state. They signify feelings that are simultaneously negative and forceful, which are depicted in scenes that are brimming with tension. In addition, it is noteworthy that emotion words are absent in the vicinity of the metaphors, which are often paired with silence that serves to accentuate their force. Furthermore, as only a selected few characters of the saga display their feelings in this way, this forms a part of the overall character construction in the saga.

On the second level, the use of the hydraulic metaphors in *Njáls saga* encompasses a discussion on emotional restraint and how and when emotions should ideally be expressed or repressed, such as in the cases of Skarpheðinn and Ásgrímr and when the blood gushes out of Þórhallr's ears.

On the third level, the hydraulic expressions of the feelings of Flosi, Ásgrímr, and especially Þórhallr are clustered on one of the fundamental narrative axes in the saga, more specifically in the build-up towards the burning and in its aftermath. A *crescendo* occurs in the narrative that is marked with metaphors of emotions in a pressurized container that threatens to boil over in the tragedy of which they are a part.

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[76] *Nj*, pp. 402–03.
[77] Lönnroth, *Njáls Saga: A Critical Introduction*, p. 112.
[78] Miller, *Why Is Your Axe Bloody?*, p. 274.

They punctuate the escalation of events leading to the burning (Flosi), the tragic death of Njáll (Þórhallr), and the conflicts in the aftermath of the burning (Ásgrímr and Þórhallr). In this sense, they embody the anxious and shattering cultural and social wrestling with resolving a grave fundamental conflict, while addressing the core values of honour, status, justice, and retaliation. As a part of this, Þórhallr's swelling leg becomes a particularly rich metaphor in a three-fold way. The actual emergence of the swelling marks the build-up of the tense struggles around the burners being brought to justice. The boil itself is a harmful ailment, an anomaly on the body, which can be viewed as signifying the pathology of the issue that demands a cure. This accumulates in the piercing of the ailment and release of the fluids and in Þórhallr subsequently starting the battle by committing the first kill, which reflects the immediate solution to the pathology at hand. When the law fails, blood vengeance becomes the resort.

This is not the only instance in *Íslendingasǫgur* where a swollen limb can be taken to signify a larger structure in the narrative, although it appears in a somewhat smaller form. In *Þórðar saga hreðu*, which is classified as a late saga (*c.* 1350),[79] a swelling in Þórðr's battle-wound serves both as a metaphor for the aggressive dispute between Eiðr, Þórðr, and Ásbjǫrn, and for their eventual reconciliation as the swelling is cured:

> Svá lýkr, at þeir sættast, ok skal Eiðr gera um öll mál þeira ok vígaferli. Gengu þeir til handsala, Þórðr ok Ásbjörn ok Skeggi. Hönd Þórðar þrútnaði ok blés upp. Eiðr skar ór eggfarveginn ór sárinu; tók þá ór verkinn allan.[80]

It was Eiðr who caused the wound, and it is Eiðr who cures it by cutting away the edges, which can be taken to indicate that he had poisoned the sword's edge. The trio's reconciliation is manifested in the cure of the hand, the same hand that seals the settlement with the other two.

[79] See Vésteinn Ólason, 'Family Sagas', p. 115. Oldest manuscript witness is dated to *c.* 1400.
[80] *Þórðar saga hreðu*, p. 220. 'This concludes with their reconciliation, and Eiðr is assigned the role of deciding the compensation for their actions and slayings. They approached to shake hands on this. The hand of Þórðr bulged and swelled up. Eiðr cut the edges of the wound, and the pain ceased.'

4.5 Conclusion

Hydraulic metaphors serve as an expression of an inner state and they appear as somatic reactions that the characters cannot control. The metaphor is used to describe very strong negative feelings of anger, grief, fright, or all of these on the same occasion. These bodily reactions give away the feelings that characters are often trying to restrain or conceal. However, hydraulic metaphors also operate on multiple other levels in the text. They form a part of a discourse in the saga on the desirability of emotional repression and control and on the shamefulness of feelings being blatantly exposed in a particular way. This concerns the saga's wider dialogue on emotional restraint, which will be discussed in Chapter 7 of this dissertation.

In *Njáls saga*, somatic expressions of emotions communicated with a hydraulic metaphor are reserved for elite honourable males (Hǫskuldr Dala-Kollsson, Skarpheðinn, Flosi, Ásgrímr, and Þórhallr), and they are never applied to describe the feelings of treacherous, shady characters, men of lower status, or women. At the same time, other elite male characters, such as Njáll and Gunnarr, do not display their emotions in this way, but other features are prominent in their characterization.[81] Thus, such particular descriptions form a part of the overall character construction of the saga.

Physically, emotions appear in the text as a force that has a fluid form within the body, which in turn functions like a pressurized container for the fluid. As I additionally demonstrate in the following chapter, emotions are conceptualized in the two sagas as originating in the heart and chest. The fluids bulge and flow through the body and move back and forth towards and from its walls, manifesting in colour changes (pallor, blushing, and blue-black colour), red patches, and swelling of the body. If the emotions are not controlled, soothed, or released through action, this can have grave physical consequences, such as fainting (Þórhallr) or the risk of death, as in *Egils saga*. The body as the container of feelings is not 'sealed'; it can overflow or explode in the case of extreme, forceful emotions. The force of these emotions presses outwards and threatens to burst the container, and the emotions appear in the text as released in the form of blood, sweat, hail, or pus. This is intermittently described through the artistic use of dramatic similes (such as *blóð* or *nár*) with mythological connotations (*hel*) or with reference to the kenning tradition (tears of hail). The same model appears in *Egils*

[81] On Njáll, see Section 7.3.4. On Gunnarr, see Sections 1.3.1 and 7.3.

saga, where mythological connotations can be argued to appear through Egill's metaphorical purging of melancholy through the 'vomiting' of his emotions in poetic form.[82]

The model described here includes all the core features of the humoral schema and broadly conforms to the conceptualization of emotions within the Latin knowledge system in the long twelfth century. For the present purposes, it can be said that the hydraulic physiology of emotions as it appears in *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga* is conceptualized within an artistic framework in an intricate web reflecting the intersection of Latin and vernacular traditions in a creative fusion.

The notion of emotions as being fluid aligns in some ways with elements in Old Norse mythology. As discussed on the following pages, poetry as a liquid relates to the myth of the poetic mead, and kennings in Egill's poetry convey a conceptualization of the breast as the joint container of skaldic powers and emotions. This pectoral model of the mind as it appears in the kenning system is the topic of the ensuing chapter.

[82] A wider study of other texts in the genre could add to this summary. Heat is not a prominent part of the physiology manifested in *Njáls saga* (although note how Gunnarr becomes very 'varmt' (hot) and 'reiðr' (angry) when he dreams of the death of his brother Hjǫrtr, *Nj*, p. 155). However, heat is occasionally described in other sagas as accompanying strong emotions. In *Fóstbrœðra saga*, for example, Þórdís's love for Þórmóðr is described as 'hot' and accompanied with 'varmri blíðu' (warm tenderness), *Fóst*, p. 174. See also 'heitt vinfengi' (warm friendship) in *Fljótsdœla saga*, pp. 234, 289; hot flames of love in *Víglundar saga*, p. 82; hot love in *Hallfreðar saga*, p. 192. Additionally, various examples of heat relating to anger and love are in *biskupasögur* and *riddarasögur*; see *ONP Registre*.

5 THE HEAD, THE HEART AND THE BREAST

5.1 Bodily conceptions of emotion in skaldic poetry

Kennings in Old Norse skaldic poetry have the capacity to shed light on the finer nuances of the bodily emotional depiction in Old Norse literature. The circumlocutions in kennings carry within them imagery and expressions of the poets' conceptions of the body and emotions — that is, the imagery in kennings can be conceived of as a reflection of the poets' and the audience's knowledge and understanding of these concepts. Kennings can thus be perceived in terms of cognitive linguistic theories, which hold that lexical categories and metaphors in language reflect how we conceptualize our knowledge and life experiences.[1] Indeed, kennings can be viewed as 'repositories of

[1] 'Cognitive linguistics' is an umbrella term for approaches to the study of the relationship between language and the mind. A wealth of scholarly literature exists on the subject. For a recent overview of themes in cognitive literary studies, see Jaén and Simon, 'An Overview of Recent Developments in Cognitive Literary Studies'. See also Richardson's useful but less recent overview in 'Studies in Literature and Cognition: A Field Map'. For examples of applied cognitive literary theory, see *Cognitive Literary Studies: Current Themes and New Directions*, ed. by Jaén and Simon; *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Literary Studies*, ed. by Zunshine; *Cognitive Literary Science: Dialogues between Literature and Cognition*, ed. by Burke and Troscianko. Studies applying the cognitive linguistic approach to skaldic poetry include those by Clunies Ross, who analysed the construction of kennings in terms of cognitive frames in 'The Cognitive Approach to Skaldic

conceptual information and world knowledge'.[2] Accordingly, they can function for a researcher of the past as 'points of access' to large-scale conceptual knowledge structures.[3]

Charles J. Fillmore's notion of *frame semantics* is one of the conceptual cornerstones of the cognitive linguistic approach.[4] The theory holds that the meaning of words and word groups is essentially based on all the requisite knowledge and experiences that relate to these words. The knowledge forms a frame around the word group, and it follows that the words within it cannot be understood without possessing a specific range of knowledge. It also follows that each word evokes the knowledge it highlights.[5] Seen through this lens, kennings can provide insight into Old Norse poets' conceptualization of the location and features of emotions in the body, by way of the artistic associations the poets have made in their creation.

The purpose of this chapter is to explore what conceptions of and what range of emotions the skaldic kennings for the body (or rather body parts) encompass. Furthermore, the prosimetrical nature of *Egils saga* and *Njáls saga* provides an opportunity to explore in particular how those same ideas represented in the sagas' verses interact with and conform to the ideas represented in their prose.

The focus of the following analysis will be on head, heart, and breast kennings in the skaldic corpus. The reasons for selecting these three categories are two-fold. First, the heart and breast have been observed to be the location of the mind in previous studies of disparate Old Norse works, although none of these provide a comprehensive survey specifically on the expression of emotions. Guðrún Nordal concludes in her examination of body kennings in thirteenth-century skaldic poetry that 'the poetic imagery that supposes the mind resides in the chest is dominant in chest-kennings in the thirteenth century'.[6] In her study on Anglo-Saxon psychologies, Leslie Lockett draws attention to what she terms the 'cardiocentric' nature of Old Norse psychologies as

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Poetics'; Orton, 'Spouting Poetry: Cognitive Metaphor'; Bergsveinn Birgisson, 'Skaldic Blends Out of Joint'.

[2] Cuyckens, Sandra, and Rice, 'Towards an Empirical Lexical Semantics', p. 57.

[3] Langacker, *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar*, p. 63.

[4] Fillmore, 'Frames and the Semantics of Understanding'. Fillmore's frame semantics theory is summarised and expanded on by Croft and Cruse, *Cognitive Linguistics*, pp. 7–27. See also the foundational work on cognitive metaphor theory, *Metaphors We Live By*, by Lakoff and Johnson.

[5] Croft and Cruse, *Cognitive Linguistics*, pp. 7–27.

[6] Guðrún Nordal, *Tools of Literacy*, p. 258.

represented in examples from *Atlakviða*, *Skáldskaparmál,* and a scene in *Njáls saga*.[7] In his study of *Fóstbræðra saga,* Jónas Kristjánsson highlights that the heart and breast are depicted as the locations of various emotions in the saga.[8] These findings warrant further study of the range of emotions and cognitive qualities that are depicted as situated in the breast or the heart.

Second, in addition to the heart and breast kennings, kennings for the head are of interest for comparison. Most learned medical Latin writings in the long twelfth century concentrated on the Galenic theory of the humours and assumed that the heart played a pivotal role in how emotions operate within the human body and that feelings emanated from the movement of humours and vital spirits to and from the heart.[9] However, the role of the brain and the head was also thought to be of great significance. Galenic ideas assumed that the movement of the humours could be caused by both physiological changes and cognitive acts,[10] and that the brain played a role in sensory and motor function and was associated with 'higher psychological activities'.[11] As demonstrated in Section 2.2.3, learned texts derived from the Latin medical tradition were known in thirteenth-century Iceland and could have influenced native models. For example, in the *Etymologies*, Isidore considers the disturbance of some mental states to originate in the brain.[12] In *Af natturu mannzins ok bloði,* it is explained that phlegm, which causes a man to be 'vstǫðugr, vakr ok udiarfr' in his disposition,[13] has its seat in the brain.[14]

The scope of the present survey is the examination of kennings from the whole skaldic corpus for the head, breast, and heart. This survey further draws attention to the skaldic verse found in *Egils saga* and *Njáls saga* and examines the representations of the head, breast, and heart in relation to the expression of emotions and cognitive processes in the prose of these sagas.

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[7] Lockett, *Anglo-Saxon Psychologies*, pp. 146–48.
[8] Jónas Kristjánsson, *Um Fóstbræðrasögu*, pp. 272–74.
[9] Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, pp. 429–32; Boquet and Nagy, 'Medieval Sciences of Emotions', pp. 31–35. See Section 2.1.1.
[10] Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, pp. 94–98; Rocca, *Galen on the Brain*, pp. 17–47.
[11] Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, p. 95.
[12] *Etym*. VII. 9. On *Etymologies* in medieval Iceland, see Section 2.2.1.3.
[13] *Hauksbók*, p. 182. 'Unstable, alert and un-daring.'
[14] Ibid. On this treatise, see Section 2.2.2.

Rudolf Meissner's 1921 taxonomic study of kennings, *Die Kenningar der Skalden*, supplies a base for a thematic examination of the imagery used. For the purposes of this study, Meissner's examples were compared and scrutinized for accuracy using the recently published editions in the series *Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages,* here abbreviated as *SkP*.[15] Guðrún Nordal's study of body kennings in thirteenth-century skaldic poetry, *Tools of Literacy*, was also consulted.

Skaldic poetry was composed from the ninth to the fourteenth century. Its preservation history makes the surviving poems notoriously difficult to date with accuracy.[16] The earliest poems have a long history of oral transmission before they were put down in writing, and the vellum manuscripts containing them only date from *c.* 1200 to the late fourteenth century.[17] Despite the vast time span of composition, the present study analyses kennings from the corpus as a whole to obtain the clearest possible view of the overall representation and bodily location of emotions in the tradition of kennings. This might additionally give clues to any patterns of change in the representation of the ideas discussed here when poetry considered to be older is compared to that which is assumed to be newer.

5.2 Kennings for the head

Head kennings in the skaldic corpus are quite numerous. Roughly forty are listed by Meissner as referring to the head.[18] Brain kennings seem to be extremely rare; Meissner lists only one: *hjarna ægir*[19] (sea of the brain), which furthermore is doubtful.[20] Apart

[15] Three volumes of eight (excluding the bibliography) are still forthcoming at this time. Finnur Jónsson's edition, *Den norsk-islandske skjaldedigtning: B*, 2 vols. (abbr. *Skj* I and II), was consulted in the cases of poetry not yet published in this series.
[16] Gade, 'Dating of Poetry and Principles of Normalisation'; 'The Dating and Attribution of Verses in the Skald Sagas'.
[17] Guðrún Nordal, *Tools of Literacy*, pp. xxii–xxv.
[18] Listed on pp. 126–29 in Meissner, *Die Kenningar der Skalden*. See also Guðrún Nordal on head kennings in thirteenth-century skaldic poetry in *Tools of Literacy*, pp. 239–44.
[19] Þjóðólfr ór Hvini, *Ynglingatal* 16, *SkP* I, 36; Meissner, *Die Kenningar der Skalden*, p. 129.
[20] The kenning is translated to Danish by Finnur Jónsson as meaning in English 'sea of the skull' [BRAIN], *hjarni* here having been doubtfully taken as 'skull' (*Skj* I, p. 11). It is not taken as a brain kenning in *SkP* but is translated as 'fluid of the brain' (*SkP* I, p. 36).

from the two examples of the mythological kenning *Heimdalls hjǫrr*[21] (the sword of Heimdallr), there are two types of base words in the head kennings on Meissner's list. They either refer to nature (e.g., cliff, mountain, ground, land, beach, or stump) or to human abodes (e.g., fortress, hall, tower, or settlement).

The determinants are primarily of two kinds. First, in nearly half of the head kennings, the determinant is an anatomical part of the head. These kennings will not be all listed here,[22] but representative examples include the head being determined by the scalp in *svarðar stofn*[23] (stump of the scalp) and *svarðar strǫnd*[24] (beach of the scalp) and by the hair in *skarar land*[25] (land of hair) and *skarar fjall*[26] (mountain of hair). The head is also determined by the shoulders, such as in *herða klettr*[27] (crag of the shoulders), the ears in *hlusta grunnr*[28] (ground of the ears), the eyes in the composite kenning *brásalr tungls*[29] (eyelash-hall of the moon), the jaws in *munna grund*[30] (ground of jaws), or the crown in *krúnu klif*[31] (cliff of the crown). The most common organ as a determinant is the brain, as in *heila grund*[32] (ground of the brain), *hjarna háturn*[33] (high tower of the brain), and *hjarna byggð*[34] (settlement of the brain).

Second, approximately half of the remaining head kennings are determined by headgear: a helmet or a hat that the head supports or fills. Examples include *hjalmstofn*[35] (helmet peg), *hjalmsetr*[36] (helmet stand), *fjǫrnis fold*[37] (land of the helmet), *fjǫrnis stallr*[38]

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[21] Bjarni …ason, *Fragments* 1, *SkP* III, p. 21; Grettir Ásmundarson, *Lausavísur* 7 in *Skj* I, p. 289. English translations of kennings in this chapter are my own but are informed by the translations of the editors of *SkP*.
[22] See Meissner, *Die Kenningar der Skalden*, pp. 126–29.
[23] Hallfreðr vandræðaskáld Óttarsson, *Erfidrápa Óláfs Tryggvasonar* 6, *SkP* I, p. 409.
[24] Rǫgnvaldr jarl and Hallr Þórarinsson, *Háttalykill* 32, *SkP* III, p. 1041.
[25] Bjǫrn Hítdœlakappi Arngeirsson, *Lausavísur* 20, *Skj* I, p. 281.
[26] Einarr Skúlason, *Fragments 2*, *SkP* III, p. 153.
[27] Snorri Sturluson, *Háttatal* 65, *SkP* III, p. 1177.
[28] Úlfr Uggason, *Húsdrápa* 6, *SkP* III, p. 415.
[29] Eilífr Goðrúnarson, *Þórsdrápa* 15, *SkP* III, p. 108.
[30] Þorfinnr munnr, *Lausavísur* 1, *SkP* I, p. 845.
[31] Árni Jónsson ábóti, *Lausavísur* 1, *Skj* II, p. 461.
[32] Snorri Sturluson, *Háttatal* 63, *SkP* III, p. 1175.
[33] Rǫgnvaldr jarl and Hallr Þórarinsson, *Háttalykill* 40, *SkP* III, p. 1048.
[34] Gunnlaugr Leifsson, *Merlínusspá II* 35, *SkP* II, p. 165.
[35] Anonymous, *Krákumál* 14, *SkP* VIII, p. 745.
[36] Þjóðólfr Arnórsson, *Sexstefja* 1, *SkP* II, pp. 112–13.
[37] Snorri Sturluson, *Háttatal* 62, *SkP* III, p. 1173.
[38] Þorkell Gíslason, *Búadrápa* 7, *SkP* I, p. 948.

(support of the helmet), and *hattarstallr*[39] (hat support). It thus clearly emerges that, in the head kennings of the corpus, the head is typically determined by either the physical parts associated with the head or headgear and that no association is made with cognitive abilities or emotions.

Only two head kennings listed by Meissner fall outside of this pattern, where the determinant is a mental or an abstract concept. The first one, *aldrs gnapturn*[40] from Snorri Sturluson's *Háttatal* refers to the head as the seat of life. It is translated as the 'high tower of life' by Faulkes and as the 'jutting tower of life' by Gade[41] who, like Meissner, classifies it as a head kenning. Guðrún Nordal argues for it possibly being a breast kenning on the grounds that *aldr* is a known determinant in kennings for the breast.[42] The context in the verse, however, strongly points to the referent being 'head' in this kenning because the verse describes how *aldrs gnapturnar* are 'levelled' (*slétta*) in a battle, which seems most likely to allude to beheadings. The idea of levelling the 'jutting towers of life' conforms to the context in which the head is placed in other head kennings, where the head is most frequently mentioned in reference to someone losing his life by beheading. This does not necessarily entail the life force, consciousness, or cognitive abilities being depicted as situated in the head but can be read as a description of warriors losing their lives in battle in this verse without any allusion to emotions or thought being located in the head.

The second kenning is *rýnnis reið* in *Sonatorrek* 19[43] from *Egils saga*. It has been translated into English as 'chariot of thought'[44] or as 'carrier of runes'.[45] If this kenning refers to the head, as Meissner classifies it, it is the only head kenning in the corpus where cognitive abilities are placed in the head. However, the verse is abstruse and presumably corrupt. The stanza, and indeed the poem as a whole, is only preserved in

[39] Anonymous, *Nóregs konungatal* 18, *SkP* II, pp. 773–74.
[40] Snorri Sturluson, *Háttatal* 50, *SkP* III, p. 1159.
[41] See Faulkes' translation, Snorri Sturluson, *Edda*, p. 196; Gade, ed., 'Snorri Sturluson, *Háttatal*', p. 1159.
[42] Guðrún Nordal, *Tools of Literacy*, p. 242.
[43] *Skj* I, p. 36; *Eg*, p. 253.
[44] Turville-Petre, ed., *Scaldic Poetry*, p. 38.
[45] Guðrún Nordal, *Tools of Literacy*, p. 243.

two seventeenth-century copies (Ketlisbækur) of a now-lost medieval pergament manuscript.[46] The latter half of the verse reads thus in the manuscripts:

> […] maka eg upp ï arőar grimu rïnis rejd rjette hallda.[47]
>
> (I cannot hold up [*ï arőar grimu*] carrier of thought [> ?] properly.)

Editors have emended this in different ways, resulting in different interpretations.[48] While it is apparent from the context in the poem that the speaker is depicting the paralysing effects of his grief, the finer nuances of this expression, and the kennings in this stanza, are less obvious. The context of *rýnnis reið* is obscure, and while the kenning presumably refers to a body part depicted as the carrier of thought or knowledge (*rýni*), it is highly uncertain whether the referent is the head, breast, or tongue. Many scholars have interpreted it as a head kenning,[49] resulting in the line above translating to 'I cannot hold my head up properly' (with two consecutive kennings for the head).

However, *rýnnis reið* resembles breast kennings in its allusion to a carrier[50] and has indeed been explained as referring to the breast in a composite helmet kenning, resulting in the meaning 'I cannot hold up my helmet'.[51] Another interpretation by Jón Hnefill Aðalsteinsson holds that *rýnnis reið* refers to a rune staff, on which the speaker is

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[46] These are AM 453 4to and AM 462 4to (Ketilsbækur), written by the same hand. The variations between the two manuscripts are not significant; see Jón Helgason in *Skjaldevers*, ed. by Jón Helgason, pp. 29–33.

[47] AM 453 4to, fol. 82r; *àrőar* in AM 462 4to, fol. 96v.

[48] This applies in particular to 'ï arőar'. 'Gríma' means 'mask' or 'cowl' and is also used as a metaphor for 'night'. While 'arőar' is unintelligible, *[i]aróar gríma* is generally taken as an uncertain kenning for the face or the head, though Cleasby and Vigfusson suggest 'óróar gríma' (a night of woe); see *Icelandic-English Dictionary*, ed. by Cleasby and Vigfússon, p. 216. Compare Sigurður Nordal in *Eg*, p. 253 where 'ï arőar' is emended to 'jǫrðu' (ground) and 'rïnis' to 'rýnnis'; Ólafur M. Ólafsson ('Sonatorrek', p. 179), where 'ï arőar' is emended to 'jarðar' (ground); 'jǫrvi' (sandbank) in Olsen, 'Commentarii Scaldici. I.', p. 244. Bergljót S. Kristjánsdóttir and Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir normalise as 'aróar' and 'rýnis'; see their edition *Egils saga með formálum, viðaukum, skýringum og skrám*, p. 202.

[49] See, e.g., Sigurður Nordal in *Eg*, p. 254n; Finnur Jónsson in *Skj* I, p. 36n; Olsen, 'Commentarii Scaldici. I.', p. 244.

[50] See below on breast kennings. See also Sigurður Nordal in *Eg*, p. 253–54n, and Guðrún Nordal, *Tools of Literacy*, p. 242, who notes the 'striking similarity in the construction' of kennings for the head and breast.

[51] Ólafur M. Ólafsson, 'Sonatorrek', p. 181.

carving his poem, but finds the staff hard to hold up.[52] Bergljót S. Kristjánsdóttir and Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir explain *rýnnis reið* as most likely referring to Egill's tongue, depicted in the poem as being difficult to use in the context of composing poetry.[53] This results in the meaning 'I cannot hold my head and tongue up properly'. This interpretation further resonates with the first and second verses of *Sonatorrek*, where the speaker conveys how grief makes it hard for him to express himself through poetry: the first verse starts with the lines: 'Mjǫk erum tregt | tungu at hrœra.'[54]

Apart from *rýnnis reið*, the imagery used in the corpus of kennings in skaldic poetry, including verses attributed to early and later skalds as well as Christian and non-Christian poetry, does not ascribe or imply any role of the head or the brain in terms of sensation or thought. On the contrary, the head is mostly pictured as the blunt container of a brain, the carrier of various other body parts, or the support or filler of a hat or a helmet. Viewing the imagery in these kennings as a representation of the poets' understanding of the function of the head, in terms of frame semantics, they do not indicate that composers of skaldic poetry conceived of the head as playing any role in thought or emotional life.

The same applies when head kennings in the poetry of *Íslendingasǫgur* are examined in particular. In *Njáls saga*, the dream figure Járngrímr uses the kenning *heila borg*[55] (fortress of the brain) in a verse he recites in Flosi's dream, predicting the death of many men in battle by projecting the imagery of their 'fortresses of the brain' ending up on the ground. In *Egils saga,* we find the kenning *hattar staup*[56] (clump of the hat) in *Arinbjarnarkviða*, when Egill recollects how he freed his head from Eiríkr *blóðøx*. As for other *Íslendingasǫgur*, Gunnlaugr *ormstunga* calls the head of his rival-in-love *lokka hnakkr* (hair seat) in a stanza connoting Gunnlaugr's jealousy, as he threatens to slice his opponent's head off.[57] Kormákr Ǫgmundarson calls the head of his love-rival *hattarstallr*[58] (hat support) in a verse where his feelings of jealousy are similarly implied, while he deals a blow to his rival's head. In *Heiðarvíga saga,* the head is referred to as

[52] Jón Hnefill Aðalsteinsson, *Trúarhugmyndir í Sonatorreki*, pp. 100–02.
[53] *Egils saga með formálum, viðaukum, skýringum og skrám*, p. 202.
[54] *Skj* I, p. 34; *Eg*, p. 246. 'It is very arduous for me to move my tongue.'
[55] *Skj* I, p. 605; *Nj*, p. 348; same kenning in Gunnlaugr Leifsson, *Merlínusspá II* 35, *SkP* II, p. 165.
[56] *Skj* I, p. 39; *Eg*, p. 260.
[57] *Skj* I, p. 187; *Gunnlaugs saga ormstungu*, p. 93.
[58] *Skj* I, p. 83; *Kormáks saga*, p. 294.

hjalmastoð[59] (helmet support), and in *Bjarnar saga hítdœlakappa*, it is referred to as *skarar land*[60] (land of the hair). In *Víga-Glúms saga*, Glúmr uses the kenning *hattar fell*[61] (hat mountain), while in *Bandamanna saga*, Ófeigr Skíðason terms the head as *hattar land*[62] (land of the hat). In all these cases, the context of mentioning the head is injury or death — potential or actual — in a struggle or a battle.

5.3 The head in the prose of *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga*

In the prose of both *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga*, it is most often the case that when the head or the brain is mentioned, someone is being beheaded or struck on the head in battle. A fitting example is Skarpheðinn's encounter with Þráinn in *Njáls saga*: 'Skarpheðinn […] høggr til Þráins með øxinni, ok kom í hǫfuðit ok klauf ofan í jaxlana, svá at þeir fellu niðr á ísinn.'[63] *Egils saga* includes numerous mentions of the head in similar contexts, such as 'Þá hljóp Egill at Grími ok rak øxina í hǫfuð honum, svá at þegar stóð í heila'.[64] On a similar note, King Haraldr demands the severed head of Þórólfr Kveld-Úlfsson,[65] and Eiríkr *blóðøx* and his wife Gunnhildr request the head of Egill,[66] resulting in Egill composing the poem that frees his head, *Hǫfuðlausn*. Cognitive qualities or emotions are not depicted as situated in the head as a part of these scenes, but the head appears as a token of actual or imminent death in the context of someone being threatened, attacked, or killed.

This has further implications in some scenes in which the head becomes a token assuming a symbolic value beyond the imagery of death and battle. This applies to both sagas. In *Njáls saga*, a severed head becomes an emblem for hostility and provocation in four distinct scenes. The most notable one is when Skarpheðinn slices Sigmundr's head off and asks a shepherd boy to deliver it to Hallgerðr, 'ok kvað hana kenna mundu hvárt

[59] *Skj* I, p. 189; *Heiðarvíga saga*, p. 237.
[60] Skj I, p. 281; *Bjarnar saga Hítdœlakappa*, p. 178.
[61] *Skj* I, p. 113; *Víga-Glúms saga*, p. 70.
[62] *Skj* I, 376; *Bandamanna saga*, p. 356.
[63] *Nj*, p. 233. 'Skarpheðinn swings his axe at Þráinn; it struck his head and split it down to his molars, so that they fell down on the ice.'
[64] *Eg*, p. 100. 'Then Egill sprang at Grímr and struck the axe in his head, right into his brain.'
[65] *Eg*, p. 51.
[66] *Eg*, pp. 179–93.

það hǫfuð hefði kveðit níð um þá.'[67] In this episode, the head becomes a statement of provocation and malice. The shepherd boy becomes so frightened that he cannot deliver the head. Hallgerðr laments this afterwards because she believes that if she could have shown the head to her husband Gunnarr, he would have been left with no choice but to avenge the death of the decapitated man.[68]

Thus, the function of the head in the prose of *Njáls saga* conforms to its function in the kennings of skaldic poetry. The head is mentioned in the context of battle, and it primarily becomes a token in the context of decapitation and then a token of death. This further leads to the head becoming a strong and vivid symbol in notable scenes of whetting and provocation. By implication, in some sense, the head is portrayed as the symbol of life in these scenes, but the imagery is limited to this specific role and context, and the head is not portrayed as the seat of cognitive abilities or emotions.

The head also holds a significant, but more complex, symbolic value in *Egils saga*. In fact, the emphasis placed on Egill's head as a symbol in the narrative makes *Egils saga* stand out in the corpus of *Íslendingasǫgur*. It functions as a strong token of Egill's character; its coarse, swarthy, bold, and ugly attributes are Egill's most prominent features, associated with his wolfish, aggressive nature, which is undoubtedly linked to the idea that outer appearance reflects the inner character.[69] In the final scene of the saga, Egill's skull is dug up from his grave, and its enormity and peculiarities are described in some detail.[70] Descriptions of Egill's head are included in noteworthy scenes entailing strained interactions and power struggles with kings. It is significant that the first detailed depiction of Egill's head and face appears in a tense scene where he silently provokes King Aðalsteinn at his court through gestures and facial expressions.[71] Furthermore, Egill is noted as towering above the heads of other men in the presence of

[67] *Nj*, p. 117. 'And said that she would recognise if that was the head that had recited slander about them.'
[68] Apart from the example described here, the three other scenes are when Þorgeirr Starkaðarson expresses his wish to kill Gunnarr and deliver the head to Hallgerðr (*Nj*, p. 157), when Þráinn slices the head off Kolr but keeps it to show the jarl as a token (p. 200), and when Kári chops off the head of Gunnarr Lambason with such force that it bounces on to the table of the king (p. 443).
[69] See Bergljót S. Kristjánsdóttir and Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir, 'Um Egils sögu', pp. xxii–xxvii. See *Eg*, e.g., the introduction of Egill (p. 80), the description of his head (p. 143), and Egill's own words (p. 260). On the wolfish nature of Skalla-Grímr's head, see *Eg*, p. 65.
[70] *Eg*, p. 299.
[71] *Eg*, pp. 143–44. On the performative nature of Egill's emotional expression in this scene, see Section 6.1.

King Eiríkr *blóðøx*,[72] which mirrors a similar scene with his father Skalla-Grímr earlier in the saga.[73]

In Bergljót S. Kristjánsdóttir's analysis of the symbolism and narrative function of the head in *Egils saga*, she associates the wolf imagery with both Old Norse mythology and European learned ideas in the long twelfth century.[74] Bergljót argues that Egill's head is depicted as an Icelandic *primum caput*, in line with John of Salisbury's organic analogy of the commonwealth as a body and the king as its head. Egill's head is thus portrayed on the level with the heads of Norwegian kings.[75] Thus, in *Egils saga,* the head appears as an important contextual literary symbol of status, provocation, malice, character construction, and discontent, through the specific features and gestures of the head and face. Yet, while this imagery contributes to the expression of Egill's emotional state via facial expressions, body language, and the head's appearance, this does not include the depiction of emotions or cognitive abilities *as situated in the head*.

Therefore, in neither the prose of *Egils saga* nor *Njáls saga* is the head depicted as the location of emotions or cognitive abilities. It is, however, applied as a literary symbol in a web of connotations and contextual meaning in varied scenes: its decapitation, physical features, and gestures, situationally signify provocation, malice, status, character aspects, grief, and sadness.

5.4 Kennings for the heart and breast

Returning to the poetry, the roles of the heart and the breast are in many respects depicted in a similar way in skaldic kennings, although breast kennings are far more numerous. This similarity results in the fact that it can, in some cases, be difficult to differentiate between them.

In *Skáldskaparmál,* one finds probably the longest string of emotion words in Old Norse literature, appearing in Snorri Sturluson's many recommendations for how to determine the various nuances of the concept of *hugr*, which resides in the breast:

[72] *Eg*, p. 179.
[73] *Eg*, p. 63.
[74] Bergljót S. Kristjánsdóttir, 'Primum caput', pp. 77–82.
[75] Ibid., pp. 82, 91.

> Brjóst skal svá kenna at kalla hús eða garð eða skip hjarta, anda eða lifrar, eljunar land, hugar ok minnis. Hugr heitir sefi ok sjafni, ást, elskugi, vili, munr. Huginn skal svá kenna at kalla vind trǫllkvinna [...] Hugr heitir ok geð, þokki, eljun, þrekr, nenning, minni, vit, skap, lund, trygð. Heitir ok hugr reiði, fjándskapr, fár, grimð, bǫl, harmr, tregi, óskap, grellskap, lausung, ótrygð, geðleysi, þunngeði, gessni, hraðgeði, óþveri.[76]

The Old Norse word *hugr* is often translated into Modern English as 'thought' or 'mind', which glosses over the word's finer nuances that can contain many contextual and situational meanings referring to the mental state of a person (positive or negative). This is attested in countless examples in Old Norse texts[77] and the above recommendations in *Skáldskaparmál*.

As for mythological kennings involving *vindr trǫllkvinna* (wind of giantesses), their meaning and mythological roots are thoroughly analysed and discussed by Judy Quinn who argues that the referent for these kennings, identified in *Skáldskaparmál* as *hugr*, should be variously understood in the sense of 'desire', 'battle spirit', or 'battle'.[78] Quinn suggests that the 'range of meaning of *hugr*' is 'better encapsulated by the single notion of "attitude" rather than "thought"',[79] and points out that the list in *Skáldskaparmál* includes terms where 'there is little indication that thought as an abstract concept is being designated'. [80]

It is indeed most plausible that *hugr* is best understood as an overarching hypernym that can assume and entail many meanings of subordinate terms (hyponyms) all connoting a state of mind, disposition, or direction of one's thoughts as well as cognitive abilities. Its semantic range includes the meanings of the Modern English

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[76] Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Skáldskaparmál*, p. 108. 'The breast shall be referred to by calling it house or enclosure or ship of the heart, the spirit or the liver, land of energy, hugr and memory. Hugr is called affection and fondness, love, infatuation, longing, desire. Hugr shall be referred to by calling it wind of the giantesses [...] Hugr is also called disposition, attitude, energy, fortitude, efficiency, memory, wit, temper, temperament, loyalty. Hugr is also called anger, enmity, hostility, ferocity, harm/evil, grief, sorrow, bad temper, rage, duplicity, insincerity, inconstancy, frivolity, brashness, impulsiveness, atrociousness.' Translation modified from Faulkes, in Snorri Sturluson, *Edda*, p. 154.

[77] See long lists of examples and citations under the entry 'hugr' in *Icelandic-English Dictionary,* ed. by Cleasby and Vigfússon, and *Ordbog over det gamle norske sprog*, ed. by Fritzner. See also 'hugur' in *Íslensk orðabók*, ed. by Mörður Árnason.

[78] Quinn, 'The "Wind of the Giantess"'.

[79] Ibid., pp. 212, 230–31.

[80] Ibid., p. 231.

hyponymic concepts of 'feeling' or 'emotion' but exceeds those categories by including cognitive qualities, such as intelligence, will, and memory. However, it is not immediately clear how to translate the finer nuances of *hugr* into English as they exist in skaldic poetry, given how condensed the verses and the kennings are. Additionally, ambiguity is often purposefully integrated into the artwork of the poem and the construction of kennings. Thus, translators often resort to rendering *hugr* and its hyponyms connoting emotion, such as *móðr*, *geð*, and *sefi*, simply as 'mind', the widest possible term.

5.4.1 Heart kennings

The broad scope of the vocabulary for emotions depicted in the section on *hugr* in *Skáldskaparmál* already implies that the chest area accommodates a wide range of feelings. This is supported in the heart and breast kennings of the corpus.

Kennings for the heart are far less common than for the breast. Meissner lists thirteen.[81] The base word is characteristically a stone or something round and hard, resonating with Snorri's recommendations in *Skáldskaparmál*: 'Þat skal svá kenna, kalla korn eða stein eða epli eða hnot eða mýl eða líkt ok kenna við brjóst eða hug. Kalla má ok hús eða jǫrð eða berg hugarins.'[82]

When they are examined, two types of determinants emerge. The first type comprises kennings where the heart is determined by its location with the aid of a kenning for the breast. These are *aldrklifs akarn*[83] (acorn of the life cliff [BREAST]), *aldrklifs epli*[84] (apple of the life cliff [BREAST]), *geðvangs mýll*[85] (round stone of the mood field [BREAST]), and *grjót hugarsess*[86] (stone of the mind seat [BREAST]). These kennings associate the heart with life, *hugr*, and the disposition (*geð*) through its location in the body. Furthermore, there is an example of this type with an adjective that puts sorrow

[81] Meissner, *Die Kenningar der Skalden*, p. 138.
[82] Snorri Sturluson, *Edda. Skáldskaparmál*, p. 108. 'It shall be referred to by calling it grain or stone or apple or nut or ball or the like and referring to it in terms of breast or hugr. It can also be called house or ground or mountain of hugr.' Translation modified from Faulkes in Snorri Sturluson, *Edda*, p. 154.
[83] Rǫgnvaldr jarl and Hallr Þórarinsson, *Háttalykill* 30, *SkP* III, p. 1039.
[84] Ibid., p. 1038.
[85] Ibid., p. 1038.
[86] Ibid., p. 1039.

directly in the heart, in the combination *harmsfullr hallr hugstrandar*[87] (sorrowful stone of the shore of mind [BREAST]).

The second type of determinants are cognitive and emotional qualities, kennings that present the heart as the seat of emotion and cognition. This type includes more numerous examples. These are *hugsteinn*[88] (mind stone) and *geðsteinn*[89] (stone of disposition), in a combination denoting joy in *glaðr geðsteinn*[90] (cheerful stone of disposition). Another example of the latter, though not listed by Meissner, is *steðji gleði*[91] (anvil of joy). The heart is also the seat of life, courage, and vigour, as reflected in *fjǫrsegi*[92] (life muscle), *þróttar steinn*[93] (stone of vigour), *hart hugarkorn*[94] (firm grain of mind/courage), *hart móðakarn*[95] (firm acorn of courage), and *dolgs akarn*[96] (acorn of the enemy/fiend).[97] Thus, the poets' cognitive schema of the function of the heart, as represented in the heart kennings, indicates their conceptualization of the heart as the carrier of a range of emotions: joy, sorrow, vigour, and courage.

In addition, there are a few ambiguous or uncertain kennings with cognitive or emotional determinants where it is difficult to determine whether the referent is the heart or breast, such as *vizkunnar hverfi*[98] (abode of wisdom). This is also true for *hyggju knǫrr*[99] (ship of thought), *hyggju jǫrð*[100] (land of thought), and *hugbyggð*[101] (mind

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[87] Anonymous, *Leiðarvísan* 42, *SkP* VII, pp. 175–76.
[88] *Hyndluljóð* 41, in *Eddukvæði* I, p. 467.
[89] Sturla Þórðarson, *Hákonarkviða* 38, *SkP* II, pp. 726–27.
[90] Rǫgnvaldr jarl and Hallr Þórarinsson, *Háttalykill* 37, *SkP* III, p. 1045.
[91] Anonymous, *Pétrsdrápa* 43, *SkP* VII, pp. 834–35.
[92] *Fáfnismál* 32, in *Eddukvæði* II, p. 309.
[93] Eilífr Goðrúnarson, *Þórsdrápa* 11, 22, *SkP* III, pp. 99, 123.
[94] Anonymous, *Málsháttakvæði* 7, *SkP* III, p. 1221.
[95] *Helgakviða Hundingsbana* I 53, in *Eddukvæði* II, p. 257.
[96] Eilífr Goðrúnarson, *Þórsdrápa* 11, *SkP* III, p. 99.
[97] To Meissner's list can be added *móðfjall* (mind mountain, Guðbrandr í Svǫlum, *Fragment* 2, *SkP* III, p. 198), from the composite breast kenning *verǫld móðfjalls* (world of the mind mountain). Meissner, however, considers *móðfjall* to refer to the breast. To this can be added *hneggi ótta* (Haraldr hárfagri Hálfdanarson, *Snæfríðardrápa* 1, *SkP* I, p. 68), which is not listed by Meissner as a heart kenning but is classified as such by Russell Poole who translates it as 'rock of fear'. See 'Haraldr hárfagri Hálfdanarson, *Snæfríðardrápa*', ed. and trans. by Russell Poole, p. 68. However, as Poole points out, the kenning is the result of complex manuscript emendations; see ibid.
[98] *Skj* II, p. 486, yet unpublished in *SkP*. Compare interpretations in *Skj* II, p. 486, and Meissner, *Die Kenningar der Skalden*, p. 138. Considering the context of the verse, which appears in *Fóstbrœðra saga*, the kenning is likely to refer to the heart.
[99] Rǫgnvaldr jarl and Hallr Þórarinsson, *Háttalykill* 74, *SkP* III, p. 1084.

settlement), which are all classified as heart kennings by the editors of *SkP*, but their context and construction indicates that they could be referring to the breast.

5.4.2 Breast kennings

Meissner lists roughly sixty kennings for the breast.[102] The base words employed are numerous. One series rests on the concept of land or ground (such as *láð, vangr, tún, rein, strǫnd,* or *fjǫrðr*) and paths (*braut* or *stígr*) as well as the cosmos (*heimr* or *verǫld*). Most commonly, however, the base word references a house or other human abode, such as *hǫll, rann, salr, hof, tjald,* and *borg*.[103] The breast is also featured as a ship (*knǫrr, nǫkkvi,* and *byrði*).

The determinants are of two kinds. First, seven of the kennings determine the breast by being the area of organs in the chest, mainly the heart,[104] such as *hjarta salr*[105] (heart's hall), *hjarta borg*[106] (fortress of the heart), and *gollorhǫll*[107] (hall of the pericardium). Second, and of most interest to this study, the great majority of breast kennings are determined by cognitive abilities and emotions. To illustrate this, those kennings are listed here and categorized according to their determinants to examine the function of the breast in the conceptualization of emotions that appear in the imagery of skaldic poetry. The English translations provided in brackets alongside the heading of each determinant reflect a range of semantic meanings of the Old Norse word. For convenience, where applicable, the first word is consistently used throughout.

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[100] Anonymous, *Pétrsdrápa* 3, *SkP* VII, p. 799.
[101] Rǫgnvaldr jarl and Hallr Þórarinsson, *Háttalykill* 6, *SkP* III, p. 1014.
[102] Meissner, *Die Kenningar der Skalden*, pp. 134–38.
[103] Guðrún Nordal notes that in the case of thirteenth-century poetry, '[t]he comparison of the body to a building is indebted to Christian doctrine and in this way the poetic imagery can be traced to theological ideas.' *Tools of Literacy*, p. 266.
[104] Only two kennings refer to other organs in the chest: *lungtorg* (lung's marketplace) in Játgeirr Torfason, *Lausavísa* 1, *SkP* II, pp. 652–53, and *þindar salr* (hall of the diaphragm) in Anonymous, *Stanzas from Snorra Edda* 18, *SkP* III, p. 530. Kari Ellen Gade notes that, although *lungtorg* is a regular kenning for the breast, it refers in this context to the residence of the heart and thus translates the kenning as referring to the heart. See 'Játgeirr Torfason, *Lausavísa* 1', ed. and trans. by Kari Ellen Gade, pp. 652–53. The base word *torg* (marketplace), however, points to the referent being the breast.
[105] Anonymous, *Krákumál* 27, *SkP* III, p. 772; Anonymous, *Nikulásdrápa* 3, *SkP* III, p. 568; Anonymous, *Líknarbraut* 4, *SkP* III, pp. 233–34.
[106] Kolbeinn Tumason, *Lausavísa* 9, *Skj* II, p. 49.
[107] Gunnlaugr Leifsson, *Merlínusspá II* 35, *SkP* VIII, p. 165.

Table 5. Breast kennings categorized according to their determinants

DETERMINED BY LIFE/SPIRIT OF LIFE		
aldrklif	(life cliff)	Rǫgnvaldr jarl, Hallr Þórarinsson, *Háttalykill* 29, 30[108]
fjǫrbraut	(life course)	Grímr Droplaugarson, *Lausavísur* 3[109]
fjǫrrann	(life hall)	Hallfreðr *vandræðaskáld*, *Erfidrápa Óláfs Tr.* 15[110]
DETERMINED BY *HUGR* (MIND, THOUGHT, TEMPER, EMOTION, DISPOSITION, COURAGE, ARDOUR)		
hugar borg	(stronghold of the mind)	Anonymous, *Brúðkaupsvísur* 16[111]
hugar fylgsni	(mind's hiding place)	Egill Skalla-Grímsson, *Sonatorrek* 1[112]
hugar rann	(hall of the mind)	Anonymous, *Líknarbraut* 7[113]
hugar sess	(mind seat)	Rǫgnvaldr jarl, Hallr Þórarinss., *Háttalykill* 30[114]
hugar skógr	(mind forest)	Anonymous, *Heilags anda drápa* 5[115]
hugarland	(mind land)	Anonymous, *Máríuvísur III* 2[116]
hugborð	(mind board)	Anonymous, *Plácitusdrápa* 18[117]
hugstrǫnd	(shore of mind)	Anonymous, *Leiðarvísan* 42[118]
hugtún	(mind meadow)	Gísli Súrsson, *Lausavísur* 9[119]
muntún hugar	(desire enclosure of the mind)	Hervǫr, *Lausavísur* 13[120]
DETERMINED BY *SEFI* (MIND, AFFECTION, EMOTION, DISPOSITION)		
sefa stígr	(path of the mind)	Snorri Sturluson, *Háttatal* 6[121]
sefborg	(fortress of the mind)	Egill Skalla-Grímsson, *Lausavísur* 15[122]
sefrein	(the mind land)	Eilífur Goðrúnarson, *Þórsdrápa* 23[123]

[108] *SkP* III, pp. 1038–39.
[109] *Skj* I, p. 184; *Droplaugarsona saga*, p. 174.
[110] *SkP* I, p. 421.
[111] *SkP* VII, p. 540.
[112] *Skj* I, p. 34; *Eg*, p. 246.
[113] *SkP* VII, p. 237.
[114] *SkP* III, p. 1039.
[115] *SkP* VII, p. 455. Atwood translates as [SOULS]; see 'Anonymous Poems, *Heilags anda drápa*', ed. and trans. by Katrina Attwood, pp. 455–56.
[116] *SkP* VII, pp. 719–20.
[117] *SkP* VII, p. 193.
[118] *SkP* VII, pp. 175–76.
[119] *Skj* I, p. 98; *Gísla saga Súrssonar*, p. 62.
[120] *SkP* VIII, p. 394.
[121] *SkP* III, p. 1110.
[122] *Skj* I, p. 45; *Eg*, p. 149.
[123] *SkP* III, p. 124.

Determined by *geð* (mood, mind, temperament)

geðfjall	(mood mountain)	Anonymous, *Heilags anda drápa* 3[124]
geðfjǫrðr	(mood fjord)	Úlfr Uggason, *Húsdrápa* 1[125]
geðknǫrr	(mood ship)	Sturla Þórðarson, *Hákonarkviða* 33[126]
geðrein	(mood land)	Hofgarða-Refr Gestss., *Poem about Þorsteinn*[127]
geðvangr	(mood meadow)	Rǫgnvaldr jarl, Hallr Þórarinss, *Háttalykill* 29[128]
glær geðveggr	(clear mood wall)	Snorri Sturluson, *Háttatal* 50[129]

Determined by *lyndi* (temperament, disposition)

lyndis láð	(temperament's land)	Anonymous, *Líknarbraut* 5[130]

Determined by joy or laughter

glaumberg	(joy cliff)	Vǫlu-Steinn, *Ǫgmundardrápa* 1[131]
hlátr-Elliði	(laughter ship)	Eilífr Goðrúnarson, *Þórsdrápa* 15[132]
hlátra hamr	(laughter's covering)	Egill Skalla-Grímsson, *Hǫfuðlausn* 20[133]

Determined by *munr* (desire, longing, delight, joy)

munar grunnr	(ground of desire)	Egill Skalla-Grímsson, *Hǫfuðlausn* 19[134]
munar kalfa	(land of desire)	Arngrímur ábóti Brandss., *Guðmundardr.* 15[135]
munstrǫnd	(shore of desire)	Egill Skalla-Grímsson, *Hǫfuðlausn* 1[136]

Determined by *móðr* (zeal, stirring of the mind, vehemence, acrimony, anger, grief)

móðsefa tjald	(tent of zeal mind)	Snorri Sturluson, *Háttatal* 50[137]
verǫld móðfjalls	(world of the zeal mountain)	Guðbrandr í Svǫlum, *Fragment* 2[138]

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[124] *SkP* VII, pp. 453–54. Attwood interprets as [soul]. See 'Anonymous Poems, *Heilags anda drápa*', ed. and trans. by Katrina Attwood, pp. 455–56. The referent being [heart] can also be considered, as in *móðfjall* (mind mountain) in Guðbrandr í Svǫlum, *Fragment* 2, *SkP* III, p. 198.
[125] *SkP* I, p. 405.
[126] *SkP* III, p. 721.
[127] *SkP* III, p. 250.
[128] *SkP* III, p. 1038.
[129] *SkP* III, p. 1159.
[130] *SkP* VII, pp. 234–35.
[131] *SkP* III, p. 428.
[132] *SkP* III, p. 108.
[133] *Skj* I, p. 33; *Eg*, p. 193.
[134] *Skj* I, p. 33; *Eg*, p. 192. *Mærðar grunnr* (grounds of flattery) in later manuscripts (e.g., AM 453 4to, fol. 59v)
[135] *Skj* II, p. 375.
[136] *Skj* I, p. 31; *Eg*, p. 185. Additionally, some manuscript readings include from this same stanza *munknǫrr* (ship of desire) or *minnisknǫrr* (ship of memory); see *Skj* I, p. 31; *Eg*, p. 185; Meissner, *Die Kenningar der Skalden*, p. 136.
[137] *SkP* III, p. 1159.
[138] *SkP* III, p. 198.

DETERMINED BY *ELJUN* (ENERGY, DILIGENCE, VIGOUR)		
eljunstrǫnd	(shores of energy)	Snorri Sturluson, *Háttatal* 63[139]
DETERMINED BY CONSCIENCE		
samvizkunnar bygð	(seat of conscience)	Anonymous, *Lilja* 84[140]
DETERMINED BY *HYGGJA* (THOUGHT, MIND, REASON, INTELLIGENCE)		
hyggju knǫrr	(ship of thought)	Rǫgnvaldr jarl, Hallr Þórarinss., *Háttalykill* 74[141]
hyggju staðr	(place of thought)	Egill Skalla-Grímsson, *Sonatorrek* 2[142]
hyggju tún	(thought's enclosure)	Anonymous, *Líknarbraut* 40[143]
DETERMINED BY WITS OR INTELLECT		
vizkunnar salr	(hall of the wits)	Anonymous, *Pétrsdrápa* 36[144]
greina garðr	(enclosure of the wits)	Anonymous, *Pétrsdrápa* 45[145]
DETERMINED BY WILL		
vilja borg	(stronghold of the will)	Snorri Sturluson, *Háttatal* 51[146]
vilja byrði	(ship of will)	Þjóðólfr ór Hvini, *Ynglingatal* 4[147]
DETERMINED BY MEMORY[148]		
minnis garðr	(enclosure of memory)	Arngrímur ábóti Brands., *Guðmundardrápa* 3[149]

The above poets' construction and use of kennings for the breast and heart demonstrate the breadth of emotional and cognitive qualities that are depicted as residing within the chest. The heart appears as the anatomical location of joy, sorrow, vigour, and courage. The heart is also determined by its placement in the breast, which in turn is depicted as the seat of the spirit of life, affection, joy, desire, delight, vehemence, mood, temperament, and conscience. Additionally, but in fewer examples, the breast is

[139] *SkP* III, p. 1175.
[140] *SkP* VII, pp. 656–57.
[141] *SkP* III, p. 1084.
[142] *Skj* I, p. 34; *Eg*, p. 246.
[143] *SkP* VII, pp. 275–76.
[144] *SkP* VII, pp. 827–28. *Vizkunnar hverfi* (abode of wisdom), which appears in a *lausavísa* from *Fóstbrœðra saga* (*Skj* II, p. 486), is likely to refer to the heart, considering the context.
[145] *SkP* VII, p. 836.
[146] *SkP* III, p. 1160.
[147] *SkP* I, p. 14.
[148] On memory as depicted in skaldic and eddic poetry, see Heslop, 'Minni and the Rhetoric of Memory in Eddic, Skaldic, and Runic Texts'.
[149] *Skj* II, p. 372.

determined by cognitive qualities, such as thought or reason, intelligence, will, and memory. *Hugr* is the most common determinant and can, as discussed above, refer to a range of emotions and cognitive qualities. Quite distinct from the modern dichotomy, which tends to separate rational thought and emotions, cognitive and emotional qualities seem to be viewed as having a similar nature and are depicted as originating from the same place: the breast.

When contrasted with kennings for the head discussed above, it becomes very clear that, within the tradition of skaldic poetry, emotions are depicted as residing entirely in the breast and the heart and never in the head. The same holds true for cognitive qualities, apart from one doubtful kenning (*rýnnis reið*, discussed above). In addition to the multiple meanings of *hugr* (which include both cognition and emotion), this indicates that, in Old Norse poetic language, emotions and cognition are not viewed in terms of Latin learned medical literature, which assumed some role for the brain in cognitive acts and 'higher psychological activities.'[150]

It is further evident that this pattern applies to both early and later poetry with and without Christian themes. All categories of heart and breast kennings listed above, except those that include only one or two examples, contain kennings from poems that are attributed to both early and later skalds. They also include poems with pre-Christian and Christian themes. From this, it can be deduced that the conceptualization of the heart and breast as the seat of emotions and cognition is a deeply ingrained cognitive frame of knowledge in the tradition of Old Norse skaldic poetry from all five ages of its composition. If the kennings can be viewed as 'repositories' of knowledge and 'points of access'[151] to the knowledge structures of the Old Norse poets and their audience, they offer a clear indication that this particular cultural group explicitly conceived of emotion and cognition through a chest-centred, or pectoral, model of the mind.

The consistency of this schema as it appears in the kennings does not, however, preclude flexibility, and it is possible that it makes the model even more absorbent. A good example is the single case of the breast appearing as the seat of conscience (*samvizkunnar byggð*). This kenning appears late, in the anonymous religious poem, *Lilja*, dated to the fourteenth century, as a part of a description of the breast as burning

[150] Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, p. 95.
[151] Cuyckens, Sandra, and Rice, 'Towards an Empirical Lexical Semantics', p. 57; Langacker, *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar*, p. 63.

with sin.[152] In this case, the Christian context introduces an emotional concept and places it within the traditional chest-centred emotional frame of knowledge, at a later stage of the skaldic tradition.

5.5 The heart and breast in *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga*

'Hiarta mannz kenner allz' is stated in the prologue of the thirteenth-century *Second Grammatical Treatise*.[153] Old Norse literature contains some vivid examples of the heart being physically inspected to discern its owner's personal traits and emotions of courage, or lack thereof. In the eddic poem *Atlakviða*, the hearts are cut out of the characters Hjalli and Hǫgni, revealing Hjalli's cowardice and identity by quivering and trembling, but Hǫgni's courage through its remaining still.[154] In *Fóstbrœðra saga*, Þorgeirr Hávarsson's heart is cut out of his dead body to satisfy the curiosity of people who want to know what the heart of such a brave man looks like. It turns out to be rather small, 'ok hǫfðu sumir menn þat fyrir satt, at minni sé hugprúðra manna hjǫrtu en huglaussa, því at menn kalla minna blóð í litlu hjarta en miklu, en kalla hjartablóði hræzlu fylgja."[155]

Fóstbrœðra saga is more concerned with the functions of the heart than other *Íslendingasǫgur*. The hardness of Þorgeirr's heart in relation to his courage is repeatedly mentioned,[156] and Þormóðr's heartstrings are graphically described when he is wounded.[157] As for the breast, it is depicted in the saga as the seat of courage, fright, wrath, and joy.[158] The heart is mentioned by name in the prose of *Fóstbrœðra saga* fifteen times, more often than in any other *Íslendingasaga*. *Njáls saga* comes second with four

[152] On the dating, see Chase, '(Introduction to) Anonymous, *Lilja*', p. 555.
[153] *The So-Called Second Grammatical Treatise*, ed. by Raschellà, p. 27. 'The heart of a man knows [or feels] everything.' The treatise is thought to have been written in the late thirteenth century; see Raschellà, p. 130. The prologue is only preserved in Codex Wormianus (AM 242 fol.), *c*. 1340–1370.
[154] *Atlakviða* 21–24, in *Eddukvæði* II, p. 377; see also *Völsunga saga*, pp. 208–09.
[155] *Fóst*, pp. 210–11. 'And some people maintained that the hearts of courageous men are smaller than those of cowards, because men say that there is less blood in a small heart than in a big one, and that fear comes with the heart blood.'
[156] *Fóst*, pp. 128, 133, 210.
[157] *Fóst*, p. 276 (Flateyjarbók version). In accordance with this, the heart is also depicted as the seat of cowardice (pp. 33–34). Stinginess (*sínka*) is also depicted as situated in the heart (p. 33).
[158] *Fóst*, p. 190 (*óttaleysi*), p. 144 (*œðra*), p. 128 (*heipt*), p. 16 (*gleði*), respectively. See also Jónas Kristjánsson, *Um Fóstbrœðrasögu*, pp. 272–73.

mentions of the heart.[159] Three of these depict the heart as the carrier of emotions, and one metaphorically portrays the heart as the seat of life. The scenes are as follows.

In a dramatic scene, Ámundi *inn blindi* laments his blindness, which prevents him from avenging the death of his father. The killer refuses to compensate him, and Ámundi comments that this cannot possibly be just in the eyes of God, 'svá nær hjarta sem þú hefir mér hǫggvit.'[160] The phrase in this context addresses Ámundi's bereavement. The mention of the heart brings into focus the location of his loss in his heart. The sentence can be read as an expression of grief, while simultaneously indicating feelings of dishonour for not being compensated. Miraculously, Ámundi briefly gains his vision back for a moment just long enough to strike an axe through the killer's head.

The second example in *Njáls saga* is located in a no less dramatic scene where Hildigunnr Starkaðardóttir powerfully whets her uncle Flosi to take blood vengeance on her behalf. When Flosi arrives at Hildigunnr's estate, she greets him with the following words, marking the onset of an intense scene where events quickly escalate: 'Kom heill ok sæll, frændi, ok er nú fegit hjarta mitt tilkvámu þinni.'[161] Hildigunnr is here expressing warm feelings towards Flosi and her joy at his coming, which she describes as felt in her heart. However, these opening words (the sincerity of which can be doubted) mark the beginning of a performance on her part that has a determined goal. Hildigunnr performs her grief for the loss of her husband and her feelings of dishonour to affect Flosi's actions and force him to avenge by blood.

The third example from *Njáls saga* where the heart is mentioned in an emotional context depicts the courage seated in the heart of Gunnarr Hámundarson. This appears in a stanza recited by Gunnarr after he has died and become a revenant. He recites the verse from his grave mound, proclaiming that he had wanted to die in battle rather than to yield to his enemies:

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[159] As for other *Íslendingasǫgur*, see *Finnboga saga* (p. 274) and *Fljótsdæla saga* (p. 246), where the heart is mentioned in the context of courage; *Hávarðar saga Ísfirðings* (p. 336), depicting grief situated in the heart; and *Víglundar saga* (p. 82), where the heart is mentioned twice in the same section, denoting feelings of love in both cases. For the breast, see *harmr* (grief) residing in the breast in *Harðar saga* (p. 32), *vitrleikr* (wisdom) in *Króka-Refs saga* (p. 145), and *elska* (love) in *Víglundar saga* (pp. 82, 103). All of the above sagas have been classified as late sagas.

[160] *Nj*, p. 273. 'As you have struck so close to my heart.'

[161] *Nj*, pp. 289–90. 'Be most welcome, uncle, my heart rejoices at your coming.'

> Mælti dǫggla deilir,
> dáðum rakkr, sá er háði
> bjartr með beztu hjarta,
> benrǫgn, faðir Hǫgna:
> Heldr kvazk hjálmi faldinn
> hjǫrþilju sjá vilja
> vættidraugr en vægja,
> val-Freyju stafr, deyja —
> ok val-Freyju stafr deyja.[162]
>
> (Dáðum rakkr dǫggla deilir, faðir Hǫgna, sá er háði bjartr með beztu hjarta benrǫgn, mælti: Heldr kvazk sjá hjǫrþilju vættidraugr vilja deyja, val-Freyju stafr, hjálmi faldinn en vægja.
>
> The warlike giver of rings [> WARRIOR], the father of Hǫgni, who fought splendidly with the best heart (i.e. courage) in battle, spoke: That shield-holding ghost [> WARRIOR] said that he would rather die, staff of a Valkyrie [> WARRIOR], with his helmet on, than to yield.)

The third line of the stanza speaks of the 'best heart' that Gunnarr had when fighting, in the sense that his heart was very courageous. These three examples above from *Njáls saga* depict the heart as containing a range of emotions: grief, joy, and courage.

The fourth mention of the heart in *Njáls saga* depicts the heart as a seat of the life force in a metaphorical way. This image appears in a dream that Gunnarr has before the battle at Knafahólar. In the dream, a pack of wolves tears his brother's breast apart, and one of the beasts vividly clenches his heart in its jaws.[163] The premonition turns out to be fulfilled, as his brother loses his life in the battle.

Conforming to this, the only mention of the heart by name in *Egils saga* conceptualizes it as the location of the feeling of fright, and by implication, courage. This is in the second half of a *lausavísa* where Egill iterates his battle skills to his companions:

> […]
> en ef ek em með átta,
> esat þeir tolf, es skelfi
> at samtogi sverða
> svartbrúnum mér hjarta.[164]

[162] *Nj*, p. 193.
[163] *Nj*, p. 156.
[164] *Eg*, p. 231.

> (But if I have eight [companions], there are not twelve men that frighten my heart, the dark-browed man, in a battle of swords.)

It is noteworthy that the verb used for 'frighten' is *skelfa*, which also carries the meaning of 'to make something tremble'. *Skelfa* thus includes the imagery of a somatic marker of fear, manifested in the quivering heart of a coward, such as Hjalli in *Atlakviða*, as previously mentioned. Egill's verse is reminiscent of Gunnarr's stanza from *Njáls saga* quoted above. Both men are boasting in verse about their own skills in battle and their courage, which they depict as residing in their hearts. Consequently, while the examples from the two sagas are few, they are unanimous in demonstrating that the depiction of the heart when it is mentioned in *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga* conforms to the overall pattern in skaldic kennings.

5.6 *Egils saga*: The breast as the seat of creation

No kennings for the breast appear in the poetry of *Njáls saga*, but six of the kennings from the above list of breast kennings are found in the poetry of *Egils saga*. This is more than from any other saga.[165] The kennings are *hugar fylgsni* (mind's hiding place), *hyggju staðr* (place of thought), *sefborg* (fortress of affection), *munstrǫnd* (shore of desire), *munar grunnr* (ground of desire), and *hlátra hamr* (laughter's covering).[166] More closely examining the context of each of these six kennings in the poetry of *Egils saga*, one of them, *sefborg,* appears in a stanza recited in a delicate scene where Egill sits depressed for long hours, bowing his head down in his fur cloak. His best friend Arinbjǫrn approaches and asks what troubles him, and Egill confesses his amorous feelings towards Ásgerðr, his brother's widow. The kenning occurs in the combination *sorg sefborgar* (the sorrow of the affection fortress), a particularly intricate reference to his sorrows of love.

The other five kennings appear in the context of the creation of poetry, which is particularly connected to the place of emotions.[167] Poetry, or poetic abilities, are

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[165] Only two kennings on the list above appear in other *Íslendingasǫgur*: *hugtún* (mind meadow) in *Gísla saga Súrssonar,* p. 62 and *fjǫrbraut* (life course) in *Droplaugarsona saga*, p. 174.
[166] *Sonatorrek* 1, *Skj* I, p. 34, *Eg*, p. 246; *Sonatorrek* 2, *Skj* I, p. 34, *Eg*, p. 246; *Lausavísur* 15, *Skj* I, p. 45, *Eg*, p. 149; *Hǫfuðlausn* 1, *Skj* I, p. 31, *Eg*, p. 185; *Hǫfuðlausn* 19, *Skj* I, p. 33, *Eg*, p. 192; *Hǫfuðlausn* 20, *Skj* I, p. 33, *Eg*, p. 192, respectively.
[167] Additionally, the corpus of skaldic poetry includes a few breast kennings that have poetry as the direct determinant but lack the association to emotions discussed here. Thus, the breast is

repeatedly depicted as residing in the breast in the poems of *Egils saga*. More importantly, in the same instance, an association is made between poetry and the emotional world within the breast. In the first verse of *Hǫfuðlausn*, the kenning used for poetry is one that carries the meaning of its location at the 'shore of desire':

> Vestr fórk of ver,
> en ek Viðris ber
> munstrandar mar,
> [...][168]
>
> (I travelled west by sea, but I carry the sea of the shore of desire [> BREAST > MEAD OF POETRY/POETRY].)

Here, poetry is characterized as liquid (the sea), kept and carried in the breast, while the breast is simultaneously referred to as the place of *munr* (desire, longing, delight, and joy). This emotional part of the body (the breast) is pictured as the repository or container of poetry, and it is from this place poetry springs.[169] This imagery corresponds with what the cognitive linguist Zoltán Kövecses defines as *container metaphors* of emotions — the conceptualization of human beings as containers and emotions 'as some kind of substance (fluid or gas) inside the container'.[170] Subsequently, the speaker describes later in the poem how the poetry is stirred out of the container with the mouth:

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depicted as the seat of poetry in five kennings in Meissner's taxonomy, such as *óðrann* (poetry house) and *óðborg* (fortress of poetry) (Anonymous, *Líknarbraut* 1, *SkP* VII, p. 230; Gamli kanóki, *Harmsól* 1, *SkP* VII, pp. 73–74). However, in some cases, it is unclear whether such a kenning refers to the mouth, tongue, or breast, such as *bragar stétt* (path of poetry, Haraldr hárfagri Hálfdanarson, *Snæfríðardrápa* 1, *SkP* I, p. 68), which could refer to each of those but is generally understood as referring to the tongue, such as in Russell Poole, ed. and trans., 'Haraldr hárfagri Hálfdanarson, *Snæfríðardrápa*', p. 68; Meissner, *Die Kenningar der Skalden*, p. 135. On the uncertainty of mouth, tongue, and breast kennings, see Guðrún Nordal, *Tools of Literacy*, pp. 249–58.

[168] *Hǫfuðlausn* 1, *Eg*, p. 185.; *Skj* I, p. 30.

[169] Poetry as liquid has mythological references to the mead of poetry. Orton analyses Old Norse poetry as a liquid substance in terms of cognitive metaphor theory and mythology, in 'Spouting Poetry: Cognitive Metaphor'. Judy Quinn explores the metaphorical expression of knowledge as a liquid in eddic poetry and Old Norse myths; see 'Liquid Knowledge'.

[170] Kövecses, *Metaphor and Emotion*, p. 146. Kövecses argues that shared human physiological experience explains the cross-cultural existence of a container metaphor for emotions. See 'Anger: Its Language', pp. 184–86.

[…]
hrœrðak munni
af munar grunni
Óðins ægi
[…][171]

(I stirred the ocean of Óðinn [> MEAD OF POETRY/POETRY] from my grounds of desire [> BREAST] with my mouth.)

This is then reiterated in another stanza, where the poet describes how the praise poem for the king was drawn from the breast, but now refers to it as the place of laughter:

[…]
ór hlátra ham
hróðr bark fyr gram
[…][172]

(From my laughter's covering [> BREAST] I delivered praise for the king.)

The kennings used in the above examples portray poetry as originating from an emotional place, the breast, where desire (*munr*) and joy (or laughter, *hlátr*) reside, according to these examples. Poetry is described as carried contained in that place during a journey across the sea and eventually drawn out from there with the mouth when the destination (the king's court) is reached. However, the act of pulling the poem out of this place of emotion is not always easy for the poet. In the first stanza of *Sonatorrek*, the poem is described as if it were hiding or stuck in the poet's breast:

Mjǫk erum tregt
tungu at hrœra
eða loptvætt
ljóðpundara;
esa nú vænligt
of Viðurs þýfi
né hógdrœgt
ór hugar fylgsni.[173]

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[171] *Hǫfuðlausn* 19, *Skj* I, p. 33; *Eg*, p. 192. *Munar grunnr* is *mærðar grunnr* (grounds of flattery) in later manuscripts (e.g., AM 453 4to, 59v) and in the edition of Bergljót Kristjánsdóttir and Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir of *Egils saga*, p. 250.
[172] *Hǫfuðlausn* 20, *Skj* I, p. 33; *Eg*, p. 192.
[173] *Sonatorrek* 1, *Eg*, p. 246.

> (It is very arduous for me to move my tongue or move the scales of the poem [> (perhaps) TONGUE or GIFT OF POETRY/POEM];[174] the outlooks are not promising for Viður's loot [> MEAD OF POETRY/POETRY], nor is it easy to drag from *hugr*'s hiding place [> BREAST].)

The cause of this impediment is intense sorrow, illustrated physically in the next verse as weeping. In the second stanza of *Sonatorrek*, the poet expresses how hard it is to thrust the poem out of the breast, in this case portrayed as the place of thought:

> Esa auðþeystr
> þvít ekki veldr
> hǫfugligr,
> ór hyggju stað
> fagnafundr
> Þriggja niðja,
> ár borinn
> ór Jǫtunheimum[175]
>
> (It is not easily spurted out — heavy sobbing causes that — from the place of thought [> BREAST], the find cherished by Óðinn's descendants [> GODS > MEAD OF POETRY/POEM] that was carried long ago from the world of giants.)

In these examples from Egill's poetry, the poetic powers or poetry is situated in the breast, while the breast is simultaneously determined by emotion and cognitive abilities: delight, laughter (joy), *hugr*, and thought or intellect (*hyggja*). *Munstrǫnd*, *munar grunnr*, *hlátra hamr*, *hugar fylgsni*, *hyggju staðr,* and *hugar fylgsni* are the repositories and the source of poetry. The poem needs to be pulled out of this emotional place with the mouth or spurted out with force. Furthermore, Egill's unfulfilled longing and heartbreak are expressed as *sorg sefborgar* (the sorrow of the affection fortress), which places the sorrows of love in the breast. The breast is, in turn, determined by *sefi* (affection or mind). The above conforms to the overall pattern in skaldic kennings, where emotions and cognition are firmly placed in the breast and not in the head.

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[174] This is unclear and has been emended in editions in different ways; see Sigurður Nordal, ed., *Eg*, p. 246; Bergljót Kristjánsdóttir and Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir, eds., *Egils saga*, pp. 196–97.
[175] *Sonatorrek* 2, *Eg*, pp. 246–47. In this edition, Sigurður Nordal amends 'þriggia' in the manuscript to 'Friggjar', as does Finnur Jónsson in *Skj* I, p. 34. On this point, I follow Bergljót Kristjánsdóttir and Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir in their edition, p. 197.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter examined kennings from the corpus of skaldic poetry for the head, breast, and heart to explore what conceptions of emotions appear in skaldic kennings of the body, how they compare to those represented in the verses of *Egils saga* and *Njáls saga*, and how those conceptions interact with and conform to the ideas represented in the prose of the sagas. The kennings were listed and categorized according to their determinants and were analysed. It was demonstrated that, within the tradition of kennings in skaldic poetry, emotions are depicted entirely as residing in the heart and the breast, and never in the head. This also holds true for cognitive abilities, which are — apart from the suspect kenning *rýnnis reið* — depicted as residing within the breast. Cognitive and emotional qualities seem to be portrayed as analogous and are depicted as originating from the same place: the chest area. This pectoral model of the mind holds true for kennings in poems that are attributed to both early and later skalds as well as poems with either pre-Christian or Christian themes. In addition, in *Egils saga*, poetic powers are placed in the breast, and the creation of poetry is firmly associated with emotions. From this, it can be deduced that the depiction of the heart and the breast as the seat of emotions and cognitive abilities is a deeply ingrained frame of knowledge in skaldic poetry across the entire period of its composition.

According to the cognitive linguistic view, the speech community that created these kennings did so based on the members' knowledge of the relationship between the body, emotions, and cognition.[176] Viewed in this way, the kennings function as a gateway for the modern reader to the poets' conceptualizations of emotions and cognition. The common interpretation of *rýnnis reið* as referring to the head, and thereby placing thought in the head, contradicts the pectoral model of the mind appearing in all the other kennings. This could indicate that a more plausible interpretation of this highly ambiguous kenning, appearing in an obscure context resulting from emendations, would be as referring to the breast or tongue.

Because the chest-centred conceptual knowledge structure on the location of emotion and cognition is consistent in the whole skaldic corpus, where the earliest poems date to *c.* 900, it becomes an intriguing question as to whether this frame of knowledge is in any way adjusted in the prose of the two thirteenth-century works

[176] Fillmore, 'Frame semantics', p. 373.

discussed here, which were, like the Icelandic saga corpus as a whole, composed against the background of Latin texts. According to this present survey, the prose of both *Egils saga* and *Njáls saga* conforms to the pectoral schema presented in the corpus of skaldic poetry. Even though the head has an important metaphorical narrative function in both works, this does not include the physical portrayal of emotions or cognition as localized in the head.

While this survey shows that this was at least the case for *Egils saga* and *Njáls saga*, it is not self-evident that this applies to the whole saga corpus. A case in point is *Fóstbrœðra saga*. As noted above, *Fóstbrœðra saga* is more occupied with the heart and the breast than other *Íslendingasǫgur* and mentions these consistently as the seat of various emotions, more often than in any other saga. Furthermore, the kenning *vizkunnar hverfi*[177] (abode of wisdom), placing wisdom in the chest area, appears in a verse in the saga. However, in a learned passage in the Flateyjarbók version (GKS 1005 fol., late fourteenth century), we nevertheless find one clause that places anger in the gall and memory in the brain: 'reiði hvers manns er í galli, en líf í hjarta, minni í heila."[178] This clause, like many others in *Fóstbrœðra saga*, has Latin origins, as Jónas Kristjánsson has demonstrated.[179] Jónas has further argued that these clauses are an original part of the saga.[180] The text of *Fóstbrœðra saga* in Flateyjarbók thus includes one example that contradicts the pectoral model by locating a cognitive trait in the brain, while the saga otherwise clearly refers to wisdom and emotions as situated in the chest area. This creates a glimpse of a different tradition in the text at the side of the pectoral model of emotion and cognition, whose structure remained stable in skaldic poetry through roughly five hundred years of composition.

[177] *Skj* II, p. 486; *Fóst*, pp. 233–34. The verse is included in Flateyjarbók. It is not clear whether the kenning refers to the heart or breast. However, both point to the chest area.
[178] *Fóst*, p. 226 n1. 'A man's anger is in his gall, his life in the heart, memory in the brain.'
[179] Jónas Kristjánsson, *Um Fóstbrœðrasögu*, pp. 240–47.
[180] Ibid., p. 80.

6 Performative emotional display

In the previous two main parts, it has been probed how emotion words function within the narrative of the two sagas and how somatic signifiers and thirteenth-century epistemology of the body generates imagery used in the narrative to convey the emotional disposition of characters. Moreover, the manner in which the literary expression of emotions in the sagas is heavily focused on non-verbal cues has been addressed, as has the fact that emotions to a large extent must be inferred from the narrative. However, as the section on royal anger makes clear,[1] particular expressions of emotions within the texts of *Egils saga* and *Njáls saga* can be considered to have a social role within their narrated worlds. Regarding the saga genre as a whole, William Ian Miller observes that the public display of emotions often carries out a social function within the narrative, such as serving as a 'justificatory argument' for punitive action.[2] The probing of these kinds of expressions requires a different perspective and approach than the probing of somatic indicia, emotion words, or self-expression in poetry.

In the third and last part of this dissertation, the focus is placed on the outward-facing aspects of emotional expression: how emotions function as a medium of communication. Applying the perspectives of 'emotional practice' and 'performativity',

[1] See Section 1.3.1.
[2] Miller, *Humiliation*, p. 108.

the social performative function of emotions within the sagas is probed. The display rules that govern the presentation of feelings and how emotions function as a social-communicative tool within the narrative are examined.

In the current part, 'Performative emotional display', the key analytical concepts are defined through examples from *Egils saga*, followed by an analysis of the emotional function of whetting rituals in *Njáls saga*. I demonstrate how the ritual operates as a context and a vehicle for the feminine expression of grief, anger, and humiliation. Further, I address how this performative emotional display is a part of a chain of emotional practices, as it frequently provokes strong emotional reactions. Moreover, I discuss how this is intertwined with the saga's themes of honour, shame, and feud, but most prominently with gender and status.

In the second part, 'Scripts and honourable emotional practice', the sagas' rich discourses on appropriate emotional display are analysed. In the honour-based culture described in the sagas, honour and reputation are the prime values at the heart of how the social standing of a character is defined and upheld.[3] As Miller demonstrates, actions are frequently motivated by humiliation and shame, which are induced when honour is attacked. '[H]onor is above all the keen sensitivity to the experience of humiliation and shame',[4] and these are the feelings evoked in numerous key social settings in the sagas. The often-contradictory heroic ideals of restraint and temperance of emotions are probed and the correlation of these values to status and gender.

6.1 Emotional practice and Egill's encounter with King Aðalsteinn

To illustrate the application of the concept of emotional practice, an example will be taken from a scene in Chapter 55, where Egill demands compensation from King Aðalsteinn for the death of his brother. The stage for Egill's performance of his emotions is set when he finds his brother dead, slain in a battle waged on behalf of the king. Upon Egill finding the body in the battlefield, the narrative slows down from the action-

[3] Numerous studies have been published on the concept of honour in Old Norse society. The most recent publication are essays in *Sæmdarmenn*, ed. by Helgi Þorláksson; a classic study is by Einar Ól. Sveinsson, *The Age of the Sturlungs*. See also Meulengracht Sørensen, *Fortælling og ære*; Andersson, 'The Displacement of the Heroic Ideal'; Bauman, 'Performance and Honor in 13th-Century Iceland'.
[4] Miller, *Humiliation*, p. 84.

packed, fast-paced, descriptions of the progress of the battle and closes in on the description of Egill's reaction.

> Egill [...] hitti þar Þórólf bróður sinn látinn; hann tók upp lík hans ok þó, bjó um síðan, sem siðvenja var til. Grófu þeir þar grǫf ok settu Þórólf þar í með vápnum sínum ǫllum ok klæðum; síðan spennti Egill gullhring á hvára hǫnd honum, áðr hann skilðisk við; hlóðu síðan at grjóti ok jósu at moldu. Þá kvað Egill vísu:[5]
>
> Gekk, sás óðisk ekki,
> jarlmanns bani snarla,
> þreklundaðr fell, Þundar,
> Þórólfr, í gný stórum;
> jǫrð grœr, en vér verðum,
> Vínu nær of mínum,
> helnauð es þat, hylja
> harm, ágætum barma.[6]
>
> (Jarlmanns bani sás óðisk ekki, gekk snarla í stórum Þundar gný;
> þreklundaðr Þórólfr fell; jǫrð grœr of mínum ágætum barma nær Vínu; þat es helnauð, en vér verðum hylja harm.
>
> The slayer of the jarl [Þórólfr] did not fear, he advanced swiftly in the great Þundr's [Óðinn's] battle; earth grows over my excellent brother near Vína; that is a death-tribulation, but we must conceal our grief.)

There is careful attention to detail where Þórólfr's dead body remains the focal point and, through his body, Egill's loss. The physicality of it all is at the forefront. Egill finds Þórólfr's dead body, picks up the corpse in his arms, and washes it and prepares it himself for burial. He digs a grave with the help of his comrades, and they put the body in it with all of Þórólfr's weapons. Then, Egill puts jewellery on Þórólfr's arms before he parts with him. While the prose is loaded with corporeal imagery denoting loss, respect, and grief, the poetic voice directly addresses the feelings involved. Not only does the honourable burial ritual described in this scene function to demonstrate Egill's loyalty and compliance with the ethical codes of the honour-based society of the saga world and to emphasize the dead Þórólfr's heroic status through the grandeur of the burial, but it is

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[5] *Eg*, pp. 141–42. 'Egill [...] found there his brother Þórólfr dead; he picked up his body and washed it, then he prepared it according to the customs. They dug a grave there and put Þórólfr in it with all his weapons and clothes; then Egill clasped a gold arm ring on each of his arms, before he left him; then they stacked rocks at the grave and poured earth over it. Then Egill recited a poem.'
[6] *Eg*, p. 142.

also a public expression of Egill's grief through the poem, recited over the gravemound in the company of his followers as a part of the burial rites.

In the poem, Egill refers to his brother as *barmi minn*, which is particularly intimate because it refers to the one who grows up by the same bosom (*barmr*) and further includes a possessive pronoun (*minn*), emphasizing Egill's closeness with his brother, and through that, his loss. He likens his grief to a death agony, one that he must conceal. Simultaneously, the scene is filled with ambivalence because, as Torfi H. Tulinius discusses, Egill indirectly bears some responsibility for his brother's death, and he also desires his wife, whom he quickly proposes to after his brother's death.[7] The whole scene is a fine example of the public expression of grief through the ritual of burial.

The second part of Egill's emotional performance takes place at King Aðalsteinn's court. In full war gear, with his shield, sword, and helmet, he is offered a seat of honour straight across from the king.

> Egill settisk þar niðr ok skaut skildinum fyrir fœtr sér; hann hafði hjálm á hǫfði ok lagði sverðit um kné sér ok dró annat skeið til hálfs, en þá skelldi hann aptr í slíðrin; hann sat uppréttr ok var gneyptr[8] mjǫk. […] Ekki vildi hann drekka, þó at honum væri borit, en ýmsum hleypði annarri brúninni ofan á kinnina, en annarri upp í hárrœtr.[9]

The bowed head communicates grief while the slamming of the sword is decidedly provocative. The peculiar moving of the eyebrows is ambiguous but implies deep discontent as well as an expression of sadness. Egill himself, a little later in the scene, explains the wrinkles on his forehead and the drooping of his eyebrows as an expression of his grief:

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[7] Torfi H. Tulinius, *Skáldið í skriftinni*, pp. 51, 97.

[8] The main manuscript, M, has 'gneyptr' (bowed head); W has an unsure reading as 'gnepr' (normalised as 'gneypr') with the same meaning; see *Egils saga*, ed. by Schwabe, fol. 43v. However, K has 'greypr' (fierce-looking), *Egils saga*, ed. by Chesnutt, p. 78.

[9] *Eg*, p. 143–44. 'Egill sat down and put his shield before his feet; he had a helmet on his head and lay his sword over his knees and pulled it occasionally half out, and slammed it back into its sheaths; he sat straight up with a very stooping head. […] He refused all drink, though it was carried to him, but alternately moved one eyebrow down to his cheek and the other up to the roots of his hair.'

> Knǫ́ttu hvarms af harmi
> hnúpgnípur mér drúpa
> nú fann ek þanns ennis
> ósléttur þær rétti[10]
>
> (Hvarms hnúpgnípur knǫ́ttu drúpa mér af harmi; nú fann ek þanns rétti þær ennis ósléttur.
>
> The beetling cliffs of my eyelids [> EYEBROWS] drooped out of grief. Now I found the one who has smoothed those wrinkles on my forehead).

In this scene, the poetic voice expresses grief, while through his body, Egill simultaneously publicly expresses hostility and provocation towards King Aðalsteinn, which is only soothed when Aðalsteinn has presented him with a gold ring and two chests full of silver in compensation. When he has done that, Egill's eyebrows become normal again, and 'tók Egill þaðan af at gleðjask'[11] and he accepts the drinking horn. Intertwined, we have here at least three threads in Egill's emotional expression: the poetic voice expressing grief with emotion words, the corporeal expression of emotions through the movement of the eyebrows, and the performance in front of an audience in a setting, which has a distinct goal. This demonstrates the connection between the staging of Egill's grief and the political aim he has with his performance: to acquire honourable compensation for the death of his brother.

Taken as a whole, Egill's expression in this complex scene can be viewed as an 'emotional practice' in the terms defined by Monique Scheer.[12] Scheer's model focuses on emotional display as a social practice, emphasizing the corporeal and communicative aspects of the expression of feelings and how interlaced it is with other cultural practices, such as behaviour, rituals, language, display rules, and discourses.[13] Anchoring her

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[10] *Eg*, p. 145. For Cicero's similar description of eyebrow movement, see Gunnar Harðarson, 'Um ætt og uppruna augabrúna Egils Skallagrímssonar'.
[11] *Eg*, p. 143. 'From then on Egill started to regain his joy.'
[12] Scheer, 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?'. Scheer's approach has influenced a range of studies on emotions of the past; see e.g. Davison and others, 'Emotions as a Kind of Practice'; essays in *Performing Emotions in Early Europe*, ed. by Maddern, McEwan, and Scott; Flannery, 'Personification and Embodied Emotional Practice'.
[13] Scheer, 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?', pp. 209–15. On practice theory, see, e.g., a useful introduction and essays in *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory*, ed. by Schatzki, Cetina, and Savigny.

approach in Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus,[14] she stresses the role of the body as the primary 'actor and instrument' in emotional practice, as it not only provides 'the locus of the competence, dispositions, and behavioural routines of practice, it is also the "stuff" with and on which practices work'.[15] As Jutta Eming points out, this is particularly pertinent to medieval texts that accentuate symbolic and non-verbal display,[16] as is the case in *Egils saga* and *Njáls saga*.

Scheer's model is essentially a social constructionist model, originating within the field of sociology, and rests on the conceptualization of emotional display as communicative.[17] Thus, emotional practices, in the terms of Scheer, follow the display rules of the community they are expressed in, and they are further frequently studied as culturally contingent scripts of actions, utterances, and body language.[18] Though originating as a concept applied within social sciences and history to describe real social dynamics, all of these features can be identified in fictional texts and examined in relation to the literary expression of emotion and the social dynamics within the imagined narrated world.[19]

Entwined in Scheer's model of emotions-as-practice is the notion of how emotions are performed through staging, gestures, ritualization, and theatricalization of social practices. In the case of Egill, on the occasion of his brother's death and the subsequent encounter with King Aðalsteinn, the performance of his emotions takes place largely on the corporeal level. First, Þórólfr's body is the centre of attention, where Egill finds it, washes it, and buries it. However, the body of Egill himself is at the centre of the events at Aðalsteinn's court, where the prose not only includes vivid descriptions of Egill's intimidating body language, depressed posture, and facial expressions but also contains the first and only detailed description of Egill's head and his fierce-looking

[14] Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. See also Scheer's analysis of Bourdieu in 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?', pp. 199–209.
[15] Scheer, 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?', pp. 200–01.
[16] Eming, 'Emotionen als Gegenstand', p. 259.
[17] On this approach, see Rosenwein and Cristiani, *What is the History of Emotions?*, pp. 19–25; Turner and Stets, *Sociology of Emotions*.
[18] On such scripts, see, e.g., Wierzbicka, *Emotions Across Languages*.
[19] Representative examples of such studies are Starkey, 'Brunhild's Smile'; Tennant, 'Prescriptions and Performatives'; Eming, 'On Stage'. Starkey and Tennant focus on the *Niebelungenlied*, while Eming analyses Gottfried von Strassburg's *Tristan*.

swarthy physique: 'hálsdigr ok herðimikill, svá at þat bar frá því sem aðrir menn váru, harðleitr ok grimmligur, þá er hann var reiðr [...] Egill var svarteygr ok skolbrúnn.'[20]

Viewing the body as a 'medium of expression' in the terms of the anthropologist Mary Douglas,[21] Sarah Künzler probes, in her study of the literary significance of the body in Old Norse and Early Irish texts, how bodies function as mediators and can be meaningfully 'read' as they appear embedded in the narrative 'within other symbolic systems in the text'.[22] Bodies are not only read as a whole, but the 'skin's visible position on the surface of the human body and its potential for being altered [...] allow it to become the bearer of meaningful inscriptions'.[23] While Künzler is referring to skin, this can be extended to other alterable and visible body parts, such as hair, limbs, face, and bodily fluids. These inscriptions carry signifiers that communicate meaning within the narrative world, both to other characters and the reader.

Þórólfr's and Egill's bodies can be read as signifying Egill's emotions. His feelings are depicted with inscriptions and alterations of their bodies that, in this way, function as instruments and actors of the emotional practice. Simultaneously, the bodily expressions of emotions interact with other dynamics of the saga. For example, Egill's intensely performed demand for acknowledgement and intimidating insistence towards King Aðalsteinn is also pertinent to the sagas' wider theme of the power struggles of Egill and his family with royalty and how Egill compares to them.[24]

It is in this way that the approach of emotions-as-practice and the probing into the communicative dimension of emotional display has the potential to shed light on the interrelation of emotions with other dynamics of the sagas, such as feuds and conflicts, gender- and class dynamics, and the motivation of the actions of characters.

The concept of performative utterances originates from the philosopher John L. Austin (1962) who formulated that, as opposed to descriptive speech, performatives simultaneously express and execute an action; they perform a speech act.[25] An example

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[20] *Eg*, p. 143. 'Thick neck and big shoulders so that he stood out from other men, harsh and grim looking when he was angry [...] Egill was dark-eyed and swarthy.'
[21] Douglas, *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology*, p. 72.
[22] Künzler, *Flesh and Word*, pp. 22–25. Quote on p. 24.
[23] Ibid., pp. 253–59. Quote on p. 255
[24] See Chapter 3 on Egill's aristocratic emotional expressions.
[25] Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*. For an elaboration and development of Austin's theory, see Searle, *Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts*.

would be a bet or a promise: 'to *say* something is to *do* something.'[26] The conditions for a successful speech act is that the performative utterance is understood and accepted as such by the audience, and that the speaker holds the status or authority to perform it.[27] This also implies, such as in the case of 'I do' in weddings, that the performative utterance requires a behavioural context to be a successful speech act because the sole syntactic aspect does not hold the complete meaning on its own. Indeed, many scholars have extended the concept of performatives and speech acts to gestures and non-verbal acts, most prominently Judith Butler in her writings on gender.[28] Non-verbal behaviour and gestures are thus viewed as possible speech acts, in the sense that they communicate meaning and evoke a procedure.

In the case of Egill and the death of his brother, Egill's body language at the court communicates his inner feelings to King Aðalsteinn, but the performance of his emotions is in the context of his political aim of obtaining honourable and generous compensation for the death of his brother. Egill holds the status to make this demand, and his message is comprehended by his audience (Aðalsteinn), as he grants the compensation. Egill's performative emotional display can be considered successful. Subsequently, Egill performs his contentment and pleasure at this by taking a drink, stopping the movement of his eyebrows, and regaining his joy. Such instrumental use of emotional display sometimes provokes questions about the 'sincerity' of the feelings communicated or how 'realistic' they are.[29] However, as Barbara H. Rosenwein notes, asking this question regarding the emotions of the past is, in a sense, meaningless because 'there is no question of "real" emotion there at all'. Emotions have multiple roles and 'are, among other things, social signals'.[30]

Within the broader academic field of cultural studies, the general term 'performative' is also used in a non-Austinian sense, signifying the theatrical aspects of what is being studied. The term is frequently loosely used to refer to staging or some kind of expression in public[31] or to the oral performance of a literary work.[32] On this

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[26] Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, p. 12.
[27] Ibid., pp. 115–19
[28] Butler, 'Performative Acts and Gender Constitution'; Butler, *Excitable Speech*.
[29] See, e.g., *The Representation of Women's Emotions*, ed. by Perfetti, pp. 10, 16.
[30] Rosenwein, 'Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions', pp. 20–21.
[31] For the diverse uses of the term, see essays in *Performativity and Performance*, ed. by Sedgwick and Parker; Burke, 'The Performative Turn in Recent Cultural History'.

matter, I follow Kathryn Starkey's definitions and distinguish between the terms 'performance' and 'performative'. While *performance* is 'a self-conscious presentation' knowing 'that someone is watching',[33] Starkey notes that the 'distinguishing feature of *performatives* is that they function to affect socially recognized states of affairs, changing the status of someone or something'.[34] In other words, when speaking of performative emotional display, it entails a goal orientation or a political aim. Furthermore, such performatives can only succeed if they are recognized as such by the audience and if they are performed by someone who holds the accepted status and authority to do so.

6.2 Whetting and female emotional display

It has often been noted that *hvǫt*, whetting, in Old Norse narratives can be conceived of as a speech act.[35] A typical unfolding of a traditional whetting scene starts by a man being humiliated. Either his masculinity and bravery are doubted, or he is shamefully injured, or his kinsman is slain. A female family member demands that the male retaliates with violence to uphold the family honour. She does this by goading and inciting the man to avenge by verbally shaming him for not reacting, such as by attacking his manhood or by lamenting the dead kinsman and, sometimes, by presenting a token, such as a weapon, bloody clothes, or the body of the slain.[36]

Njáls saga contains at least twenty-five examples of female whetting,[37] which is considerably more than in other sagas. Jenny Jochens points out that roughly half of all the examples of female whetting in the corpus of *Íslendingasǫgur* are found in *Njáls*

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[32] See, e.g., *Performing Medieval Narrative*, ed. by Vitz, Regalado, and Lawrence.
[33] Starkey, 'Brunhild's Smile', p. 163. Another version of this essay is published in Starkey, 'Performative Emotion'.
[34] Starkey, 'Brunhild's Smile', p. 163. My italics.
[35] See, e.g., Jóhanna Katrín Friðriksdóttir, *Women in Old Norse Literature*, pp. 19–21; Larrington, 'Learning to Feel in the Old Norse Camelot?', p. 91; Jochens, *Old Norse Images of Women*, p. 162. On speech acts and legal procedures in *Njáls saga*, see Bredsdorff, 'Speech Act Theory and Saga Studies'.
[36] For a thorough account of the figure of the female whetter in Old Norse narratives, see Jochens, *Old Norse Images of Women*, pp. 162–204; Jóhanna Katrín Friðriksdóttir, *Women in Old Norse Literature*, pp. 17–25.
[37] *Nj*, pp. 58, 89, 91, 93, 99, 101–02, 114, 117–18, 136, 138, 148, 154, 194, 229, 249–50, 252, 291, 319, 329, 425, 429, 442.

saga.[38] As will be analysed here, whetting forms a framework around the performative communication of emotions within the narrative of *Njáls saga* and thus functions as a literary device for emotional expression. The concept of performatives will be applied in the analysis of these expressions. Emotional practice along with all its interrelated parts (symbolism of the body, body language, actions and gestures, the context of whetting and related social phenomena within in the narrative) will be considered, as a whole, when analysing the expressions.

6.2.1 Hildigunnr Starkaðardóttir

A scene often exemplified as the hallmark scene of whetting, and one of the most powerful and dramatic emotional scenes in *Njáls saga*, is Hildigunnr Starkaðardóttir's inciting of her uncle Flosi in Chapter 116. The slaying of Hildigunnr's husband, Hǫskuldr *Hvítanessgoði*, forms part of a dramatic highpoint in the saga, which eventually leads to the burning of Njáll and his kinsfolk. In the whetting scene, which is loaded with symbols and imagery signifying Hildigunnr's loss, she goads her uncle to take up blood vengeance for the slaying of Hǫskuldr.[39]

As Carol Clover demonstrates in her detailed and insightful analysis of this scene, feelings of loss are intertwined in Hildigunnr's elaborate process of whetting, and the scene reflects that 'the *hvǫt* of Icelandic literature has its roots in a tradition of death lament'.[40] By drawing parallels to other Old Norse sagas and poems as well as historical and anthropological material, Clover argues that 'whetting and lamenting are equivalent and interchangeable elements […] the two themes are one in the sense that the one implies the other'.[41]

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[38] Jochens, *Old Norse Images of Women*, pp. 192, 283–84 with a list of examples. Jochens reviews and expands Rolf Heller's (1958) findings on the topic in his *Die literarische Darstellung der Frau*, pp. 98–122. While I mostly agree with Jochens expansion of Heller's results, the scenes are variable in their explicitness, and I consider slightly fewer cases to be examples of whetting in *Njáls saga* compared to Jochens.

[39] Flosi is not blood-related to Hǫskuldr, but Flosi is Hildigunnr's next-of-kin and a powerful chieftain, which generates expectations of him taking up the case. See Miller, *Why Is Your Axe Bloody?*, pp. 201–06.

[40] Clover, 'Hildigunnr's Lament', p. 40.

[41] Ibid., p. 23.

Here, I add to Clover's thorough analysis of this scene by examining it under the rubric of performative emotions and practice. Therefore, it becomes necessary to start a little earlier in the narrative than Clover does, where the first signs of Hildigunnr's feelings of loss are communicated and the body as a medium of loss and grief takes centre stage. Hǫskuldr has been slain while Hildigunnr is asleep in their marital bed:

> Hildigunnr vaknaði ok fann, at Hǫskuldr var í brautu ór rúminu. Hon mælti: „Harðir hafa draumar verit ok eigi góðir, ok leitið þér at honum Hǫskuldi." Þeir leituðu hans um bœinn ok fundu hann eigi. Þá hafði hon klædda sik; ferr hon þá ok tveir menn með henni til gerðisins; finna þau þar Hǫskuld veginn.[42]

The image drawn here is intimate and personal. The setting is the private quarters of the couple, where the immediate narrative focal point is Hildigunnr waking up in their bed with the feeling that Hǫskuldr is missing from her side. Hǫskuldr's body, by its absence, along with the intimate setting in a personal space, her suffering of a bad dream, and an implication that she is undressed, all underline the personal and vulnerable essence of her emotional state.[43] It is narrated how she puts on her clothes and searches for her husband until she finds his dead body. Hǫskuldr is wearing a fine scarlet cloak that Flosi had given him.

> Hon tók skikkjuna ok þerrði þar með blóðit allt ok vafði þar í blóðlifrarnar ok braut svá saman skikkjuna og lagði í kistu sína.[44]

The liquid blood Hildigunnr soaks up from her husband's dead body, along with the clotted blood she wraps into the cloak and goes on to preserve, can be read as the embodiment of her feelings. She preserves these physical parts of her husband and encloses them in her personal container (her chest). While her practical reasons for preserving parts of Hǫskuldr's body unfold later in the narrative, its context in this scene simultaneously communicates vulnerability, intimacy, and loss.

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[42] *Nj*, p. 282. 'Hildigunnr woke up and felt that Hǫskuldr was gone from the bed. She spoke: "I have had hard dreams and not good ones, and go and search for Hǫskuldr." They searched for him in the houses but did not find him. By then she had dressed herself, she goes and two men with her to the field; there they find Hǫskuldr slain.'

[43] On emotions and space, see Rosenwein, 'Emotional Space'. On the female space being situated within the private household in Old Norse narratives, see, e.g., Borovsky, 'Never in Public'.

[44] *Nj*, p. 282. 'She took the cloak and dried with it all the blood and wrapped all the clotted blood into the cloak, folded it and put it in her chest.'

Her uncle Flosi wants to avoid a blood feud and take a settlement for Hǫskuldr's death, but Hildigunnr has other plans. She is prepared when Flosi arrives at her house to stage her grief and loss to him. All her symbolic gestures at Flosi in this scene, as Clover notes, signify her bereavement and convey her feelings of loss.[45] Her staging is four-fold, with escalating force. Viewing her staging as performative, it is notable that the first three are decisively rejected by Flosi, or misunderstood, perhaps wilfully.

First, upon Flosi's arrival, she receives him with heartfelt words and has prepared a high seat for him to sit in.

> Hildigunnr sneri at honum ok mælti: „Kom heill ok sæll, frændi, ok er nú fegit hjarta mitt tilkvámu þinni." […] Flosi gekk inn í stofuna ok settisk niðr ok kastaði í pallinn hásætinu undan sér ok mælti: „Hvárki em ek konungr né jarl, ok þarf ekki at gera hásæti undir mér, ok þarf ekki at spotta mik."[46]

Flosi communicates that he is insulted by the high seat, but it is his angry dismissal of it that becomes the focal point. The high seat can be read as signalling to Flosi the absence of Hǫskuldr as the head of the family as well as Hildigunnr's emphasis on Flosi filling that role and his duty to take up vengeance.[47] A successful speech act rests on the agent having the authority and status to perform it. By dismissing Hildigunnr's gesture, Flosi effectively dismisses the power of her performative grief. Hildigunnr assures Flosi of her good intentions.

> „Þat er illa, ef þér mislíkar, því at þetta gerðum vér af heilum hug." Flosi mælti: „Ef þú hefir heilan hug við mik, þá mun sjálft leyfa sik, ef vel er; mun ok sjálft lasta sik, ef illa er." Hildigunnr hló kaldan hlátr ok mælti: „Ekki er enn mark at; nær munu vit gangask, áðr líkr."[48]

The verbal level is highly ironic, as this exchange demonstrates, and it becomes clear that their interaction is an emotionally charged power struggle, executed mainly on a

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[45] Clover, 'Hildigunnr's Lament', pp. 37–38.

[46] *Nj*, pp. 289–90. 'Hildigunnr turned to him and spoke: "Come whole and happy, uncle, and my heart rejoices at your coming." […] Flosi walked into the hall and sat down and threw from under him the high seat and spoke: "I am neither a king nor a jarl, and there is no need to make a high seat under me, and there is no need to mock me."'

[47] See Clover, 'Hildigunnr's Lament', p. 37.

[48] *Nj*, p. 290. '"It is bad that you dislike this, for I meant it well." Flosi said: "If you mean well, your doings will praise themselves if they are good, and condemn themselves if they are evil." Hildigunnr laughed a cold laughter and said: "This is nothing yet, we will come even closer to each other before this is over."'

symbolic, bodily level. Hildigunnr moves on to the performative gesture of presenting Flosi with a tattered towel to dry his hands before the meal, which is an incomplete household object that gestures to him Hildigunnr's helplessness and widowhood.[49] If he has misunderstood the first message, it now seems to be dawning on him what she is after. He responds by throwing the symbol aggressively away and cutting a piece of Hildigunnr's tablecloth instead to dry his hands. Again, he dismisses Hildigunnr's performative expression of her loss and degrades it by provocatively sabotaging a household item in return. Hildigunnr's and Flosi's interaction resembles an intense figurative fight, where her non-verbal expressions, loaded with her message, emotions, and intent, are decisively answered dismissively by Flosi. Hildigunnr now walks directly before Flosi, with a clear message:

> Hildigunnr […] gekk fyrir Flosa ok greiddi hárit frá augum sér ok grét. […] „Hvert eptirmæli skal ek nú af þér hafa eða liðveizlu?" segir hon.[50]

Flosi rejects her request for the third time. Though he verbally acknowledges that she is in grief, he replies that he will prosecute the case by law, that is, he will not avenge by blood as she is clearly asking him to do.

In these three acts, Hildigunnr thrice invokes her authority through performative emotional expression as a female whetter, but she can only succeed if Flosi acknowledges her speech act. He, however, thrice refuses to do so. At last, she walks to her quarters, opens her chest, and takes out the bloody cloak.

> Hon gekk þegjandi at Flosa. Þá var Flosi mettr ok fram borit af borðinu. Hildigunnr lagði þá yfir Flosa skikkjuna; dunði þá blóðit um hann allan. Hon mælti þá: „Þessa skikkju gaft þú, Flosi, Hǫskuldi, ok gef ek þér nú aptr. Var hann ok í þessi veginn. Skýt ek því til guðs ok góðra manna, at ek sœri þik fyrir alla krapta Krists þíns ok fyrir manndóm ok karlmennsku þína at þú hefnir allra sára þeirra, er hann hafði á sér dauðum, eða heit hvers manns níðingr ella."[51]

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[49] *Nj*, p. 290. See Clover, 'Hildigunnr's Lament', pp. 37–38.
[50] *Nj*, pp. 290–91. 'Hildigunnr […] walked before Flosi and swept the hair from her eyes and wept. […] "What action because of the slaying on my behalf can I expect, or support?" she says.'
[51] *Nj*, p. 291. 'She walked silently to Flosi. Flosi was then full, and the table had been cleared. Hildigunnr then laid the cloak over Flosi; the blood poured all over him. Then she spoke: "This is the cloak that you, Flosi, gave Hǫskuldr, and now I give it back to you. And he was slain in it. In the name of God and all good men, I charge you by invoking all the powers of your Christ, and by

Hildigunnr's speech is like a ritual; indeed, it has the 'ring of a legal incantation with sacred overtones'.[52] However, its combination with the silent pouring of the blood makes the ritual so powerful that Flosi has no other choice but to comply; it is a ceremonial charge involving a token that cannot be ignored, as Miller notes.[53] It is thus the blood, the embodied token of Hildigunnr's grief and loss, that charges the ritual with obligation, and it becomes a successful speech act.

Through the emotional practice reflected in this scene as a whole, the focus is maintained on the communicative aspects of gestures, body, and body language. It is through their symbolic connotations that the grieving emotions of Hildigunnr can be inferred, which are displayed through the context of whetting.

6.2.2 Hróðný Hǫskuldsdóttir

As Sarah Künzler writes, within literary narratives:

> [bodies] carry signs or inscriptions which are meaningful in their own right. In these narratives or episodes, bodies can be said to mediate primarily through signs on their skin or in their flesh (such as scars or wounds), or more broadly, through alterations to the surface of the body [...] These signs are *read* under special circumstances and are seen as transmitting a very particular meaning.[54]

The scene where Hróðný Hǫskuldsdóttir whets Njáll and his sons is indeed filled with such signifiers that function as vehicles for the display of Hróðný's sorrow over the slaying of her son.

Her son is Hǫskuldr Njálsson, the fourth son of Njáll, born outside of wedlock. He is ambushed by six men and killed in revenge for a slaying that his half-brothers —

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your manliness and manhood, that you avenge every wound he had on his dead body, or else be called the *níðingr* of all men.'" *Níðingr* is '[l]egally the strongest term of abuse, for a traitor, a truce-breaker, one who commits a deed of wanton cruelty, a coward'. *Icelandic-English Dictionary*, ed. by Cleasby and Vigfusson, p. 456.

[52] Clover, 'Hildigunnr's Lament', p. 39. Indeed, Miller argues that Hildigunnr's ritual has a quasi-legal element and that it has resonance in ceremonies that transfer obligation or create it, such as sworn brotherhood. Miller, 'Choosing the Avenger', pp. 188–90.

[53] On the power of a whetting ritual involving a bloody token, see ibid. Miller separates mere verbal goading from a ceremonial charge involving a bloody token, arguing that the latter could not be ignored. Ibid., pp. 179–81. On Flosi's emotional somatic reactions to this, see Section 4.2.

[54] Künzler, *Flesh and Word*, pp. 24–25. Künzler conducts such a reading of Njáll's beardlessness in ibid., pp. 142–54. See also Helga Kress's reading of Hallgerðr's hair in '"Fá mér leppa tvo": Nokkur orð um Hallgerði og hárið'.

the other sons of Njáll — committed. Already in the killing scene attention is drawn to the body of Hǫskuldr and the inscriptions on it: 'Þeir særðu Hǫskuld sextán sárum, en eigi hjoggu þeir hǫfuð af honum.'[55] The same evening, when Hróðný learns from a shepherd that her son has been killed, her reactions are somewhat peculiar:

> Hon mælti: „Eigi mun hann dauðr, eða var af hǫfuðit?" „Eigi var þat," segir hann. „Vita mun ek, ef ek sé," segir hon, „tak þú hest minn, ok akfœri." Hann gerði svá ok bjó um með ǫllu, ok síðan fóru þau þangat, sem hann lá. Leit hon á sárin ok mælti: „Svá er sem mér kom í hug, at hann myndi eigi dauðr með ǫllu, ok mun Njáll grœða stœrri sár."[56]

The reader follows Hróðný's gaze on her son's dead body and his sixteen wounds, while she makes her eerily false statement that he is, in fact, not dead and that Njáll is capable of healing such wounds. Her statement projects two simultaneous levels of meaning: an image of a grieving mother who refuses to accept her son's death in shock and denial and an undertext that can be read on a symbolic level. This subtext suggests that she is fully aware of what has happened and looks to Njáll for figurative healing of this death, that is, she is sure that Njáll has the capacity to restore her and her son's honour and to soothe her loss and grief by overseeing that proper action is taken in retaliation. Both these levels of meaning unite in Hróðný's actions and words in this scene. Simultaneously, her son's body, its wounds, and the head — along with her and the shepherd's reading of it — are at the centre of the episode. The pair take Hǫskuldr's corpse to Bergþórshváll and place it in a sheep shed, sitting up against a wall. Next, they knock on the door of the house, where a servant opens:

> Hon snarar þegar inn hjá honum ok ferr þar til, er hon kemr at hvílu Njáls; hon spurði, hvárt Njáll vekti. Hann kvezk sofit hafa til þessa, en kvezk þá vaka, — „eða hví ert þú hér komin svá snimma?" Hróðný mælti: „Statt þú upp ór bingnum frá elju minni ok gakk út með mér ok svá hon ok synir þínir."[57]

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[55] *Nj*, p. 250. 'They inflicted sixteen wounds on Hǫskuldr, but they did not slice his head off.'
[56] *Nj*, pp. 250–51. 'She spoke: "He is not dead, or was his head off?" "It was not", he says. "I will know when I see him", she says, "bring my horse and carriage." He did so and prepared everything, and they went to where he lay. She looked at his wounds and said: "It is as I thought, that he is not quite dead, and Njáll can heal bigger wounds."'
[57] *Nj*, p. 251. 'She immediately rushes past him and walks on until she comes to Njáll's bed. She asked whether Njáll was awake. He replied that he had been asleep, but now he was awake, —

The urgency and agitation communicated through Hróðný's body language imply her state of turmoil. Not only are her gestures and movements vividly expressive as she storms into the house, but the setting is also highly personal and intense, implicating emotional profundity. She walks straight into the most private quarters of the household, the bed where Njáll lies fast asleep and wakes him up, commanding him and his family to stand up, while simultaneously referring to their ties. They all rise and follow her as she walks ahead of them to the sheep shed and enters:

> Hon vatt upp skriðljósi ok mælti: „Hér er Hǫskuldr, son þinn, Njáll, ok hefir fengit á sér sár mǫrg, ok mun hann nú þurfa lækningar." Njáll mælti: „Dauðamǫrk sé ek á honum, en engi lífsmǫrk, eða hví hefir þú eigi veitt honum nábjargir, er opnar eru nasarnar?" „Þat ætlaða ek Skarpheðni," segir hon. Skarpheðinn gekk at ok veitti honum nábjargir. […] Hróðný mælti: „Þér fel ek á hendi, Skarpheðinn, at hefna bróður þíns, ok þó at hann sé eigi skilgetinn, þá ætla ek þó, at þér muni vel fara ok þú munir þó mest eptir ganga."[58]

The compound 'vinda upp ljósi' means that Hróðný slings up the lantern, so that Hǫskuldr's body is suddenly and unexpectedly lit up at the moment of their entrance into the sheep shed.[59] Thus, the body is literally put in the spotlight and immediately takes centre stage. The audience gazes at Hǫskuldr's corpse through Njáll's eyes, who examines it and sees no signs of life, only death. The focus moves to Hǫskuldr's face where the eyes, mouth, and nostrils are open. The centrality of the death and its corporeal aspect underline Hróðný's loss, which, by this, is accordingly placed in the centre of the scene along with the corpse. Further, it is through a physical touching of the corpse that the goading takes effect: Hróðný challenges Skarpheðinn to give Hǫskuldr his closing rites and in doing so, he is implicated in the task of vengeance. When Bergþóra adds extra force by joining Hróðný in the whetting, Skarpheðinn and his

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"but why have you arrived here so early?" Hróðný spoke: "Get up from the cushions, and from my *elja* and walk outside with me, her as well, and your sons."' *Elja* refers to a woman who shares a man with another woman.

[58] *Nj*, p. 251–52. 'She slung up a lantern and spoke: "Here is Hǫskuldr, your son, Njáll. He has received many wounds and now needs healing." Njáll spoke: "I see marks of death on him, but no marks of life, why have you not done the closing rites, his nostrils are still open?" "I intended for Skarpheðinn to do so," she says. Skarpheðinn stepped towards the body and did the closing rites. […] Hróðný spoke: "I place in your hands to avenge your brother, and even though he was not born in wedlock, I expect you to do well and pursue this matter most of all men.'

[59] 'Vinda upp ljósi' means to light up quickly and unexpectedly. See *Íslensk orðabók*, ed. by Mörður Árnason. See also 'vinda' in *Icelandic-English Dictionary*, ed. by Cleasby and Vigfússon; *Ordbog over det gamle norske sprog*, ed. by Fritzner.

brothers rush out of the sheep shed to take on the vengeance: '"Eggjar móðir vár oss nú lǫgeggjun." Síðan hljópu þeir út.'[60]

Thus, Hǫskuldr's body, as it sits in the sheep shed, is 'read' by Njáll and other onlookers in the sheep shed as well as the readers of the saga. Through the marks or inscriptions on his flesh and the signs on his face, his body mediates the loss Hróðný has suffered, alongside a challenge to the family's honour. Hróðný's emotional practice is performative, displayed in the narrative through the intertwined mediation of her actions, gestures, and Hǫskuldr's inscribed body, and carries a pragmatic aim: to incite vengeance that brings justice for her son, to restore their honour, and thus 'heal the wounds' of her grief and loss.

This emotive script is later repeated by Hróðný. Her brother, Ingjaldr from Keldur, plans to support Flosi and her son's killers against Njáll and his sons. Ingjaldr is in a dilemma because he is married to Flosi's niece, which collides with his ties with Njáll. Nevertheless, he has promised to side with Flosi. When Hróðný hears of this, she pays her brother a visit.[61] Upon his greeting at their meeting, Hróðný's body language again expresses a sense of urgency and haste. 'Hon tók ekki kveðjunni, en bað hann þó út ganga með sér. […] Síðan þreif hon til hans, ok settusk þau niður.'[62]

Hróðný coldly ignores her brother's joyful greeting but requests that they speak in private. There, she grabs at him and charges him with being a *níðingr* for turning against Njáll and presents him with a bloody token, her dead son's hat, 'alblóðga ok raufótta'.[63] The blood-soaked clothing appears as a material token of Hróðný's emotions, and through it, her loss and grief are emphasized by means of the performative ritual of whetting, to which Ingjaldr complies.

6.3 Anger and humiliation in the context of whetting

The whetting scenes in *Njáls saga* vary considerably in how explicit and detailed they are. At one end of the spectrum, there are elaborate scenes such as the one described above. On the other end, additional vague examples exist, such as short narrative

[60] *Nj*, p. 252. '"Our mother goads us now through law-incitement." Then they ran out.'
[61] *Nj*, pp. 318–19.
[62] *Nj*, p. 318. 'She did not reply to his greeting but asked him to walk outside with her. […] Then she grabbed at him and they sat down.'
[63] *Nj*, p. 318. 'Completely covered in blood and torn.'

statements without further description, like the brief mention of Þórhalla Ásgrímsdóttir making a vow during the burning of Bergþórshváll, when it is evident that her husband will die in the fire: 'Annarr verðr skilnaðr okkarr Helga en ek ætlaða um hríð, en þó skal ek eggja fǫður minn ok brœðr, at þeir hefni þessa mannskaða, er hér er gǫrr.'[64] The emotive scripts embedded in the close relationship between grief and whetting, described in the more elaborate scenes above, can inform the reading of Þórhalla's emotions communicated so briefly with these words. In this single sentence, Þórhalla simultaneously underlines her loss of a husband, their long time together, and her role as an inciter of vengeance by blood and this can be interpreted as a performative expression of her grief. Njáll's reactions to Þórhalla's statement show his approval of her disposition: 'Vel mun þér fara, því at þú ert góð kona.'[65] Moreover, this is an acknowledgement of her utterance as felicitous and efficacious. Þórhalla seems to keep her promise, though it is not recounted in the saga, for it turns out that her kinsmen do take action in the aftermath of the burning.

Whetting in *Njáls saga* provides a context in which emotions of loss and grief are communicated in the text through body language, gestures, and action, which is a performative display with an aim. Clover notes that the *hvǫt* has a 'two-edged nature' in the sense that both lamenting and whetting can imply the other.[66] However, *hvǫt* provides a framework for the expression of not only loss and grief but also of other emotions. Shame, loss of honour, and the accompanying emotion of anger are the primary motivations for action in the sagas.[67] Indeed, most of the whetting scenes in *Njáls saga* are not focused on the loss of a loved one but rather on humiliation and anger.[68]

[64] *Nj*, p. 329. 'My parting from Helgi is different from what I had long anticipated; I shall incite my father and brothers to take vengeance for the lives that are taken here.'
[65] *Nj*, p. 329. 'You will be successful, for you are a good woman.'
[66] Clover, 'Hildigunnr's Lament', p. 23.
[67] As discussed in Miller, *Humiliation*, pp. 93–130.
[68] *Nj*, pp. 58, 89, 91, 93, 99, 101–02, 114, 117–18, 136, 138, 154, 194, 229, 252, 442.

6.3.1 Bergþóra Skarpheðinsdóttir

Consider Bergþóra's rage when she learns that her sons have been laughed at and ridiculed. The setting is in the female space — inside the household at the dining table during a meal — where Bergþóra announces:

> Gjafir eru yðr gefnar feðgum, ok verðið þér litlir drengir af, nema þér launið. […] Þér synir mínir eruð kallaðir taðskegglingar, en bóndi minn karl inn skegglausi […] ef þér rekið eigi þessa réttar, þá munuð þér engrar skammar reka.[69]

Bergþóra thus incites her sons to take up vengeance by attacking their manhood. When her sons attempt to downplay the whole thing, she scolds them for being submissive, while making it clear that the proper emotional reaction should be extreme anger: 'Reiddisk Gunnarr þó fyrir yðra hǫnd […] ok þykkir hann skapgóðr.'[70] She herself is furious, as expressed by her body language. She walks out of the room, but 'kom innar í annat sinn ok geisaði mjǫk'.[71] As noted in Section 1.4.3.1 of this dissertation, *geisa* is exclusively used when describing female anger in *Njáls saga*. This Old Norse word is often used in other texts to describe warfare, fire, or destructive waters or sea. In the context of describing anger, it connotes a loss of control, something bursting out with force. Bergþóra's feelings of anger are thus conveyed through the imagery of her physically expressing her rage in an uncontrolled manner, while forcefully goading her sons. In this scene, a female emotive script appears that associates the performance of feelings of humiliation and the resulting anger with the act of whetting. Bergþóra's expression of her feelings is performative, and in this case, however dismissive at the onset, her sons acknowledge her authority to perform this speech act and comply in the end.

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[69] *Nj*. p. 114. 'You, father and sons, have been given gifts, and you will become small men, unless you repay them […] You, my sons, are called dungbeardlings, but my husband a beardless old man. […] if you do not pursue justice for this, you will never repel any shame.'
[70] *Nj*, p. 114. 'Gunnarr became furious on your behalf […] and he is thought of as even-tempered.'
[71] *Nj*, p. 114. 'She came in again, raging.'

6.3.2 Hallgerðr Hǫskuldsdóttir

The word *geisa* is also used to describe Hallgerðr's expression of anger when she incites her husband Gunnarr to break a reconciliation he made after Bergþóra had their worker killed: 'Hallgerðr leitaði á Gunnar mjǫk, er hann hafði sætzk á vígit. Gunnarr kvezk aldri bregðask skyldu Njáli né sonum hans; hún geisaði mjǫk. Gunnarr gaf eigi gaum at því.'[72]

As discussed in Section 1.4.3.2, Hallgerðr is portrayed as unruly and provocative. She is a strong female figure who disturbs the patriarchal hierarchy within the saga. There are frequent efforts to tame and discipline her: 'Ver þú dæl, meðan ek em heiman, ok sýn af þér enga fárskapi, þar sem við vini mína er um at eiga' her husband Gunnarr warns her.[73] 'Trǫll hafi þína vini',[74] she replies. Further attempts to tame her include her being beaten by all three of her husbands[75] (which she does not take quietly, with eventual dire consequences for them all) and being driven away by her mother-in-law.[76]

As concluded in previous parts of this dissertation, emotional expression through somatic indicia, such as colour change and swelling, in both *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga*, is reserved for male characters only.[77] Furthermore, emotion words are rarely used to describe women's feelings;[78] yet, Hallgerðr's feelings are described with emotion words more often than of any other female character in the saga, as analysed in Section 1.4.3.2, which testifies to her character's centrality in this part of the narrative. An emotion word is, however, only used once to express her anger. Rather, her anger is, along with humiliation, frequently communicated through her provocation and whetting. Indeed, Hallgerðr is the primary inciter in *Njáls saga*.[79] Her feud with Bergþóra, which starts when Hallgerðr feels humiliated by Bergþóra at a feast, spans several chapters, where they exchange insults and alternately have each other's workers killed.[80] Hallgerðr's

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[72] *Nj*, p. 99. 'Hallgerðr hounded Gunnarr greatly for having settled the slaying. Gunnarr said he would never let Njáll and his sons down; she raged greatly. Gunnarr payed no attention to that.'
[73] *Nj*, p. 92. 'Be compliant while I am away, and do not exercise any malevolence where my friends are concerned.'
[74] *Nj*, p. 92. 'May trolls have your friends.'
[75] By Þorvaldr for her insulting him, *Nj*, p. 33; by Glúmr for her accusing him of stinginess, p. 48; by Gunnarr for her thievery, p. 124.
[76] *Nj*, p. 192.
[77] See Section 4.5.
[78] See Sections 1.3.3 and 1.4.3.
[79] Hallgerðr is the actor in seven such scenes. *Nj*, pp. 91, 93, 99, 101–02, 117–18.
[80] *Nj*, pp. 90–119.

feelings of humiliation and anger are narrated through her numerous snarky retorts and the threats she makes and through her repeated harming of Bergþóra's interests. Her angry feelings are equally demonstrated in her attempts to incite her husband Gunnarr to take up vengeance for her humiliation. This she does five times, but she is unsuccessful in all cases.[81] These cases (save one more involving an anonymous woman) are the only instances in the saga where it is clear that the whetting is unsuccessful.[82] Much like Flosi, Gunnarr initially dismisses Hildigunnr's goading and does not acknowledge Hallgerðr's power to exercise the speech act of whetting. Hallgerðr is understandably dissatisfied by this. This is clearly portrayed in the narrative when she narrowly misses a chance to present Gunnarr with the sliced-off head of his slain relative:

> „Fekk Skarpheðinn mér í hendr hǫfuð Sigmundar ok bað mik færa þér, en ek þorða þat eigi," segir [smalamaðr]. „Þat var illa, er þú gerðir þat eigi," segir hon; „ek skylda færa Gunnari, ok myndi hann þá hefna frænda síns eða sitja fyrir hvers manns ámæli."[83]

Hallgerðr openly laments this lost opportunity to influence Gunnarr because a bloody token would have forced her reluctant husband to avenge his relative.[84] Thus, humiliation, along with anger, is at the heart of Hallgerðr's whetting of Gunnarr. Hallgerðr's actions and the reactions to her emotional practice through whetting are part of the saga's discussion of female agency, which is denied to Hallgerðr in these scenes and is depicted in the context of her temper, which is deemed as unruly, out of bounds, and requiring control.

6.4 Conclusion

When the focus is placed on the corporeal and communicative aspects of emotional display and how these function as a medium of communication within the narrated

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[81] *Nj*, pp. 91, 99, 102, 117–18.
[82] The sixth one is a nameless woman who whets Mǫrðr Valgarðsson. *Nj*, p. 138. In a few cases, it is not clear what the eventual outcome is.
[83] *Nj*, p. 117. '"Skarpheðinn handed me Sigmundr's head and asked be to bring it to you, but I did not dare to", says [the shepherd]. "That was unfortunate that you did not do so", she says, "I would have given it to Gunnarr, and then he would have had to avenge his kinsman or be reproved by all.'
[84] As discussed above in Section 6.2; see also Miller, 'Choosing the Avenger', pp. 179–80.

world of the saga — through rituals, body language, bodily tokens, and inscriptions on the body — it becomes clearer in what way this is entwined with other cultural practices. In this chapter, the expression of feelings has been probed as functioning in a system of cultural practices within the narrated world of *Njáls saga*. Examples have been analysed in which emotional display serves as a medium of communication through scripts of actions, utterances, and body language.

In the case of Egill, at his brother's death, his emotions are channelled through the ritual elements of burying his brother and are thus interlaced with these cultural practices, demonstrating Egill's honour and respect and his status as well as his grief. The theatrical staging of his feelings at King Aðalsteinn's court largely takes place on the corporeal level. Through Egill's body and gestures, he communicates his feelings with the distinct aim of receiving compensation from the king.

The ritualistic and corporeal aspects reflect how emotional expressions are entwined with a range of cultural practices, of which the whetting ritual is a prominent example. This ritual operates as a context and a medium for the female expression of grief, anger, and humiliation, which is depicted in the narrative through the body as the primary narrative instrument. The physical body and body parts (such as the head, wounds, skin, eyes, touch, and a dead body's face), bodily fluids (blood and tears), and body language (actions such as pacing, rushing, grabbing, and raging) function as tokens that are 'read' by the characters and the reader alike. They are the chief medium for the theatrical staging of feelings in the ritual.

Through these emotional practices, the gender- and power structures behind the expressions become more apparent. The ritual is intimately connected to the saga's discussion of female agency, gender roles, and display rules of emotions. While the emotional expression staged in the whetting process is met with approval when the whetting is deemed just (such as in the case of Hróðný and Þórhalla), it is most often met with anger and disdain. In the case of Hallgerðr, it is demonstrated through this context that she is considered out of bounds and is ignored and dismissed by Gunnarr.

In about half of the examples of whetting in *Njáls saga*, the goading is met with firm disapproval and a display of negative feelings, as the following examples show. Mörðr Valgarðsson calls a female whetter 'mannfýla'.[85] Kolr becomes 'reiðr mjǫk' at

[85] *Nj*, p. 138. 'Despicable creature.'

Hallgerðr's goading.[86] Flosi calls Hildigunnr 'ið mesta forað' who possesses malicious intentions, and he declares that 'kǫld eru kvenna ráð'.[87] Gunnarr reacts to a whetting from Hallgerðr by calling her deeds 'gráligr' and claims that 'illa gefask ill ráð'.[88] Likewise, he calls Hildigunnr *læknir*'s whetting 'gráligr'.[89] Skarpheðinn ridicules his mother for her goading by grinning and remarking that 'eigi hǫfu vér kvenna skap […] at vér reiðimsk við ǫllu'.[90] On the same occasion, Njáll reacts in a depreciating way, advising calm reactions.[91] Silent ignoring and coldness are not uncommonly expressed,[92] and a negative reaction is often expressed through vivid gestures. Flosi 'kastaði af sér skikkjunni ok rak í fang [Hildigunnar]'.[93] The husband of Þórhildr *skáldkona* 'sté þegar fram yfir borðit' and immediately drives her from the house at once.[94] Gunnarr likewise 'spratt upp ok sté fram yfir borðit' when Hallgerðr goads him to avenge an insult from Bergþóra and asserts he will not be an 'eggjanafífl'.[95]

Female performative emotional display through whetting is communicated in these cases as a negative disturbance of the peace, as Jenny Jochens argues is most often the case in the genre.[96] The female whetter thus emerges as a component in the saga's wider discussion of the ethics of honour and feuding, and the women often appear as 'vilified and turned into a scapegoat for men's failures in establishing a peaceful society'.[97] Yet, Jóhanna Katrín Friðriksdóttir has shown that the female whetter also appears in Old Norse narratives as an empowered agent in the male sphere, using whetting for the purpose of improving her life or to guard her safety.[98] However, while the success of Unnr Marðardóttir, who retrieves her money from Hrútr by inciting

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[86] *Nj*, p. 93. 'Very angry.'
[87] *Nj*, pp. 291–92. 'The worst monster.' 'Cold are the counsels of women.'
[88] *Nj*, p. 117. 'Malicious.' 'Wicked advice brings bad results.'
[89] *Nj*, p. 148. 'Malicious.'
[90] *Nj*, p. 114. 'I do not possess a woman's temper and become angry at anything.'
[91] *Nj*, p. 114. Njáll recites a proverb; 'kemsk, þó at seint fari, húsfreyja', which essentially means 'one can go slowly but still achieve the goal, mistress.'
[92] *Nj*, pp. 99, 101–02, 117–18.
[93] *Nj*, p. 291. 'Flung off the cloak and thrust it in Hildigunnr's arms.'
[94] *Nj*, p. 89. 'Arises immediately from the table.'
[95] *Nj*, p. 91. 'Jumps up and from the table.' 'Egged-on fool.'
[96] Jochens, *Old Norse Images of Women*, pp. 175, 202–03.
[97] Ibid. On a similar note, see Jesch, *Women in the Viking Age*, pp. 190–91.
[98] Jóhanna Katrín Friðriksdóttir, *Women in Old Norse Literature*, pp. 24–25.

Gunnarr to help her, is a good example of this,[99] the majority of the whetting scenes in *Njáls saga* are intimately connected to the struggle between resolving family feuds peacefully or by blood.

The pathway of this ritualized performative emotional expression through whetting is a literary motif serving the saga's wider discussion of the values of peace and ethics in a feud society, that is, the politics of the saga. Both the approval and the disdain reflect a discourse in the text on the appropriateness of emotional display, on gender structures, and on the ideal of heroic restraint and temperance, which is the topic of the latter part of this section on emotional practice.

[99] *Nj*, p. 58.

7 SCRIPTS AND HONOURABLE EMOTIONAL PRACTICE

In Chapter 3 of this dissertation, it was argued how Egill Skalla-Grímsson, in most ways, conforms to the hegemonic masculine ideal held within *Egils saga*, in the sense that it refers to gender practices that are culturally placed at the top of a hierarchy based on the subordination of other masculine types. In this sphere, to be passive or behave softly undermines one's masculinity, while action and agency reinforce it. The manner in which Egill's emotions are expressed in practice uncovers display rules within the narrative and how the text conveys the idealized emotional display of a high-status figure such as Egill. Thus, an emotive script is manifested within the narrative, which dictates that feelings of anger, humiliation, and grief should be suppressed and channelled into actions, such as provocation and retaliation. The chapter also discusses how Egill deviates from this script in key scenes and analyses the aesthetics behind this.

While *Egils saga* broadly tells the life story of one character and his family, *Njáls saga* has multiple protagonists. *Njáls saga* further contains a deeper and more varied discussion on what can be termed as appropriate emotional expression. This is particularly due to the saga's preoccupation with various aspects of honour (*sœmð*).[1] The pursuit and defence of honour, in turn, conditions to a large extent what is considered ideal in how emotions are expressed that is, what to react to and how. *Njáls saga,*

[1] As shown in Section 1.2.1, *Njáls saga* discusses 'sœmð' more often than any other saga.

therefore, invites a more complex analysis of what is considered an appropriate emotional display, which is the purpose of this section.

As is the case with other *Íslendingasǫgur*, *Njáls saga* describes a certain layer of the saga community, which is that of chieftains and other people of high social status. This social group within the narrative can be conceived of as an emotional community, which Barbara H. Rosenwein defines as a social community where the 'system of feeling' represents 'what these communities (and the individuals within them) define and assess as valuable or harmful to them [...] and the modes of emotional expression that they expect, encourage, tolerate, and deplore'.[2] As little is narrated about the lives and feelings of people in the lower layers of this society, this conceptualization is applied in the following analysis to the high-status characters in the saga.

One's honour (*sœmð*) was of fundamental importance in the society that the sagas describe.[3] Honour refers to an ethical standard, 'the good behaviour and conduct which confers esteem on a person.'[4] It has also been described as a social 'commodity'[5] because high status and power intimately depended upon having honour. One's honour further needed to be continuously guarded and maintained due to the absence of a fixed social apparatus that administered the issuance of status, in contrast to the European

[2] Rosenwein, 'Worrying about Emotions in History', p. 842.

[3] Numerous studies address the importance of honour and defending one's honour in the saga world. Influential studies include Meulengracht Sørensen, *Fortælling og ære*; essays in *Sæmdarmenn,* ed. by Helgi Þorlákssson; Miller, *Bloodtaking and Peacemaking*; Miller, *Humiliation*, pp. 93–124. A classic study is by Einar Ól. Sveinsson, *The Age of the Sturlungs*. See also Vésteinn Ólason, *Dialogues*, pp. 166–79; Bauman, 'Performance and Honor in 13th-Century Iceland'. A review of studies on honour can be found in Helgi Þorlákssson, 'Inngangur'. For a philosophical perspective on Old Norse honour, see Vilhjálmur Árnason, 'An Ethos in Transformation'.

[4] Meulengracht Sørensen, 'Social Institutions', p. 23. However, the norms of honourable conduct are situational and depend on one's position in the social hierarchy based on markers, such as gender, age, and wealth. Thus, according to Meulengracht Sørensen's analysis, a person who fulfils the honourable ideal is someone who behaves in accordance with what is expected of a person of his or her status. This person is aware of his or her self-worth and position in society and behaves according to the set limits, while someone who does not know his or her limitations and exceeds them, such as by exhibiting greed or excessive ambition, disturbs the social balance and does not fare well. See Meulengracht Sørensen, *Fortælling og ære*, pp. 212–26. On what constitutes women's honour, in particular, see ibid., pp. 226–48; Sólborg Una Pálsdóttir, 'Hlutu konur enga virðingu?'

[5] Miller, *Bloodtaking and Peacemaking*, pp. 30–31.

aristocratic system.[6] As Miller writes, honour 'was at stake in virtually every social interaction'.[7]

Pertinent to the present study is the question of what kind of emotional practices contribute to the gain and preservation of honour within the emotional community of elite people in the saga. While no previous study has focused specifically on identifying honourable emotional traits or practices in *Íslendingasǫgur*, the personal qualities that have been identified as contributing to increased honour among saga chieftains include the readiness to hold one's ground and being prepared to defend one's honour by killing if necessary; the display of qualities such as generosity, loyalty, and largeness of spirit; and being a *jafnaðarmaðr*, which means to be just in one's actions and in conducting retribution.[8] Moreover, Jesse Byock argues that, because chieftains often functioned as advocates and were men of power, more than others, they were expected to exercise moderation (*hóf*) in their dealings with other people. Being a *hófsmaðr* (moderate man) and a man of goodwill gained them prestige, whereas *ójafnaðr* (overbearingness) and immoderate and unjust actions disturbed the social order.[9]

Emphasis on moderation among chieftains is also of central importance in Theodore Andersson's 1970 analysis of the heroic ideal in ten *Íslendingasǫgur*, including *Egils saga* and *Njáls saga*. Andersson demonstrates how criticism of self-aggrandizement, overbearing actions, and excess is woven into the texts. Simultaneously, the saga text endorses conciliation, respect, diplomacy, and compromise: 'what gives a consistency to the ethical temper of these sagas is precisely a sense of proportion and moderation', Andersson writes.[10] In essence, Byock and Andersson explain the sagas' emphasis on moderation through the social context depicted in them through their criticism of feuds and the expense of the ideal of upholding one's honour at all costs. This conforms with the functional perspective on the honour system, where the pursuit of honour is viewed as a stabilizing force, grounded in the social function of controlling behaviour and

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[6] See Helgi Þorláksson, 'Virtir menn', p. 16.
[7] Miller, *Bloodtaking and Peacemaking*, p. 29.
[8] See Byock, *Viking Age Iceland*, pp. 226–27; Meulengracht Sørensen, *Fortælling og ære*, pp. 203–06.
[9] Byock, *Viking Age Iceland*, pp. 79, 190–92.
[10] Andersson, 'The Displacement of the Heroic Ideal', p. 588. Vésteinn Ólason has equally pointed out that in the sagas' 'moderation and a conciliatory spirit are also seen as positive qualities to be set in the balance against aggression and arrogance'. Vésteinn Ólason, *Dialogues*, p. 137. See also Vilhjálmur Árnason, 'An Ethos in Transformation', p. 238.

generating order in a culture that lacks centralized regulatory apparatuses.[11] Yet, honour not only consists of a person's external reputation but also has an internal aspect 'and must not be reduced to either', as Vilhjálmur Árnason points out.[12] Thus, the pursuit of honour can be assumed to condition the emotional practice of saga characters while simultaneously operating on an individual level.

The aim of this section is to identify and describe what constitutes honourable emotional practices among the emotional community of elite characters in the saga. This is done by examining how the emotional disposition of individual characters is described in the narrative, how public opinion is expressed in the saga about ideal or deplored emotional practices, the identification of the emotive scripts at play, and the fit of individual characters to the prevalent 'system of feelings' emerging from the analysis.

Njáls saga contains the largest gallery of characters of all sagas in the genre.[13] Due to the constraints of space, it is impossible to include all major characters in this analysis. Instead, examples are taken of selected protagonists involved in representative scenes that supply the richest material for the purpose of this chapter.

7.1 Self-possession and moderation

A primary indication of the exalted emotional qualities within this group can be found in the contrast between the words used to describe the disposition of the heroes of *Njáls saga* and its villains in their introductions.[14] The character's subsequent behaviour in the narrative then mostly follows the lines of the schema set by the described qualities, although the character's temperament can be tested to the extreme as the dramatic

[11] Representing this perspective, Meulengracht Sørensen defines honour as a social norm that regulates conflicts; see *Fortælling og ære*, p. 187. Miller describes honour as a social commodity in *Bloodtaking,* p. 30. Torfi Tulinius views honour in terms of Bourdieu's concept of social capital in 'Virðing í flóknu samfélagi'. For the interrelation of honour and wealth, see Jón Viðar Sigurðsson, *Chieftains and Power*.

[12] Vilhjálmur Árnason, 'An Ethos in Transformation', p. 226. Helgi Þorlákssson discusses this matter in 'Virtir menn og vel metnir'.

[13] *Njáls saga* has more than six hundred named characters, of which roughly one hundred and fifty are featured on three or more pages. A list of characters, which I have checked for accuracy, is published on https://is.wikipedia.org/wiki/Listi_yfir_persónur_í_Njálu.

[14] On the often highly formulaic descriptions of characters, see Þorleifur Hauksson and Þórir Óskarsson, *Íslensk stílfræði*, pp. 279–82; Sävborg, 'Style', pp. 115–18; Lönnroth, *Njáls Saga: A Critical Introduction*, pp. 48–49.

events of the saga unfold, and the resulting actions sometimes reveal additional or new sides of the person. These introductions provide a surface clue on the exalted emotional practices, which will be followed subsequently by a deeper analysis.

The two most prominent characters in *Njáls saga*, Gunnarr Hámundarson and Njáll Þorgeirsson, are both introduced as moderate in temper and benevolent. Njáll is described as 'vitr', 'hógværr', and 'góðgjarn'.[15] Gunnarr is said to be 'manna kurteisastr [...] ok stilltur vel',[16] and a contemporary manuscript variant adds 'ráðhollr ok góðgjarn, milldr'.[17] Before either of them is introduced, we meet Hrútr Herjólfsson, a popular chieftain of good lineage who is also moderate in temper and is introduced as 'hógværr í skapi, manna vitrastr'.[18] The indisputably virtuous and moderate chieftain, Hǫskuldr Þráinsson *Hvítanessgoði*, Njáll's foster son, is introduced as 'blíðmæltr ok ǫrlátr, stilltr vel [...] góðorðr til allra manna'.[19] Skarpheðinn Njálsson is introduced as 'skjótorðr, en þó lǫngum vel stilltr',[20] and his brother, Helgi Njálsson, is 'vitr maðr ok stilltur vel'.[21] Kári Sǫlmundarson is described by Njáll as 'skapdeildarmaðr'.[22]

Thus, the words used to describe the temperament and emotional disposition of these prominent characters of the saga emphasize their wisdom and benevolence, but above all, how self-possessed (*stilltr*), even-tempered, and moderate they are in their disposition. In contrast, the villains of the saga are characterized by a lack of restraint and moderation. Hallgerðr's uncle, Svanr, who is skilled in magic, is 'ódæll ok illr viðreignar'.[23] Her first husband, the wealthy Þorvaldr Ósvífrsson, is 'bráðr í skaplyndi', 'harðlyndr ok óvæginn'.[24] Sigmundr Lambason is described as 'hávaðamaðr mikill, spottsamr ok ódæll',[25] and his partner Skjǫldr is noted as 'illr viðureignar'.[26] The sons of

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[15] *Nj*, p. 57. 'Wise', 'moderate', and 'benevolent'.
[16] *Nj*, p. 53. 'Most courteous and self-possessed.' Based on R.
[17] GKS 2870 4to, 11v (Gráskinna), dated to 1290–1310. 'Amenable and benevolent, mild [or generous]'.
[18] *Nj*, p. 6. 'Moderate in his temper, the wisest of men.'
[19] *Nj*, p. 237. 'Fair-spoken and generous, well self-composed, kind in his words to all men'.
[20] *Nj*, p. 70. 'Hasty in his speech, but yet most often well self-possessed.'
[21] *Nj*, pp. 70–71. 'A wise man and well self-possessed.'
[22] *Nj*, p. 226. 'Even-tempered.'
[23] *Nj*, p. 32. 'Unruly/mischievous and difficult to deal with.'
[24] *Nj*, p. 30. 'Hot-tempered', 'stern tempered and unsparing.'
[25] *Nj*, p. 105. 'Very boisterous, mocking and unruly/mischievous.'
[26] *Nj*, p. 105. 'Difficult to deal with.'

Starkaðr are 'ofsamenn miklir í skapi, harðlyndir og ódælir',[27] and the sons of Egill are 'kappsamir ok inir mestu ójafnaðarmenn'.[28] Skammkell is described as wealthy but 'illgjarn ok lyginn, ódæll ok illr viðreignar'.[29] The wealthy Lýtingr from Sámsstaðir is described as 'illr viðureignar'.[30] Bergþóra's worker-turned-hitman Atli describes himself as 'skapharðr'.[31] Kolr, Hallgerðr's worker, is described as 'skapillr'.[32] Víga-Hrappr's qualities of malice, overbearingness, impetuousness, and foolhardiness are amply described.[33] All these men cause trouble in the saga, and they are described as possessing emotional and dispositional qualities that are in excess, immoderate, or uncontrolled and overbearing.[34]

Another contrast consists in the fact that no woman in *Njáls saga* is described as self-possessed or moderate, which might be because descriptions of the feelings and disposition of females in the saga are significantly fewer and more meagre than those of males. However, the three most prominent female characters in the saga (Bergþóra, Hallgerðr, and Hildigunnr) are described as rather unrestrained in their temperaments.[35] Accordingly, it is considered a significant defect ('áfátt' and 'lǫstr')[36] regarding how temperamental and unruly ('blandin mjǫk')[37] Hallgerðr is, and this is counted as bad currency when negotiations for her marriages are conducted.[38]

Thus, the main honourable male characters of elite status are all described as even-tempered and self-possessed. This is further underlined by the contrasting description of the unruly and immoderate temperament of the dishonourable men and villains, and to some degree, by the silence about the possible moderate disposition in

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[27] *Nj*, p. 146. 'Had a very vehement temper, were callous and unruly/mischievous.'
[28] *Nj*, p. 147. 'Impetuous and very overbearing.'
[29] *Nj*, p. 120. 'Malicious and lying, unruly/mischievous and difficult to deal with.'
[30] *Nj*, p. 95. 'Hard to deal with.'
[31] *Nj*, p. 95. 'Hard in temper.'
[32] *Nj*, p. 97. 'Ill-tempered.'
[33] *Nj*, chapters 87–88, 92.
[34] On the elite villain Mǫrðr Valgarðsson, who presents a special case, see Section 7.4. Another special case is the supporting character and chieftain Þráinn Sigfússon. He is not a villain, and his disposition is not explicitly described, but his vehemence and impulsive actions eventually lead to his failure and downfall, as Ármann Jakobsson argues in his 'The Impetuousness of Þráinn Sigfússon', p. 53.
[35] As is discussed in Sections 1.4.3 and 7.1.
[36] *Nj*, pp. 42, 87. 'Defective', 'vice'.
[37] *Nj*, p. 86. 'Mixed character'/'temperamental'.
[38] *Nj*, pp. 42, 86–87. On Hallgerðr, see Sections 1.4.3.2 and 6.3.2.

any female character. This indicates that, within the emotional community of men of high status in the saga, clear value is placed on emotional temperance. This resonates with the findings of Byock, Andersson, and others on the general emphasis on moderation in conduct in the society described by the sagas. However, while this is an important indication, deeper access to the saga community's assessment of exalted and deplorable emotional expressions can be provided by analysing the narrated 'public opinion' in the saga and the discussions within the narrative on the values of different emotional practices.

7.2 Public opinion and discourses on emotions

A notable discourse on appropriate emotional expression is manifested in the case of Þórhallr Ásgrímsson, who is especially prone to displaying bodily signs of emotions, as discussed in Section 4.2. Þórhallr is said to be a valiant man, big and strong, and 'vel orðstilltr ok þó bráðskapaðr'.[39] It is thus indicated that, even though he is generally self-possessed, on occasion, he is inclined to lose control over his feelings. Þórhallr is further said to have loved his foster father Njáll more dearly than his own father.[40] When Þórhallr receives the news that Njáll has been burnt to death, his reactions are very extreme in their physicality. His whole body swells up and blood spurts out of his ears until he faints.[41] It is clearly indicated that Þórhallr is extremely displeased at this:

> Eptir þat stóð hann upp ok kvað sér lítilmannliga verða, — „ok þat munda ek vilja, at ek hefnda þessa á þeim, er hann brenndu inni, er nú hefir mik hent." Þeir sǫgðu, at engi mundi virða honum þetta til skammar, en hann kvað ekki mega taka fyrir þat, hvat menn mælti.[42]

Þórhallr is of the opinion that his manliness has been diminished by such an extreme uncontrollable emotional display. He feels ashamed and embarrassed to the degree that he wants to take vengeance on those that caused his emotional upheaval by burning

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[39] *Nj*, pp. 279, 359. 'Moderate in his speech but yet hot-tempered.'
[40] *Nj*, p. 74.
[41] *Nj*, p. 344.
[42] *Nj*, pp. 344–45. 'Afterwards he stood up and said that this was unmanly, — "and I would like to take revenge for what has now happened to me, against those men who burned him." They said that nobody would view this as a disgrace for him, but he said that he could not stop people from talking.'

Njáll to death. Even though Þórhallr's comrades, who witness his embarrassment, endeavour to soothe his feelings of shame, he is still worried about how people will talk. The opinion clearly expressed in this scene is that it is embarrassing to have such an unrestrained, extreme, emotional reaction. Public opinion is directly referred to: Þórhallr considers himself to be at risk of harm to his reputation and, thus, his honour. Therefore, he wants to resort to the only thing that he feels could restore his honour: retribution.

Correspondingly, men of high status in the saga repeatedly express the perception that public opinion is against the expression of feelings in an excessive, physical, or graphic manner and that such display would result in the loss of honour. Both Skarpheðinn and Njáll try to prevent the people in their household from expressing their feelings in such a manner. During the burning of Bergþórshváll, Njáll refers to the Christian afterlife and commands the women of his household, who begin to suffer from the fire, to restrain their fear: 'Verðið vel við ok mælið eigi æðru [...].'[43] A richer scene in this regard takes place in the evening before the burning. The people in Njáll's household realize that their death is imminent when Njáll reveals to them his premonition of the devastating events about to take place.

> Ǫllum fannsk þá mikit um ǫðrum en Skarpheðni; hann bað þá ekki syrgja né láta ǫðrum herfiligum látum, svá at menn mætti orð á því gera; — „mun oss vandara gǫrt en ǫðrum, at vér berim oss vel, ok er þat at vánum".[44]

Skarpheðinn describes the public expression of despair and grief under these circumstances as detestable, something that will disgrace them all because other people would talk about it. Moreover, Skarpheðinn comments directly on what is morally expected of the people of their status: to show restraint, bear up well, and refrain completely from showing extreme emotions because they are, in his words, 'herfiligr' (abominable). He further declares that this is how it should be. Thus, restrained conduct is expected of the elite, such that they refrain from exhibiting fright or despair through voice and behaviour. Fright is considered a weakness that is firmly beneath high-status men who wish to retain their honour. This is doubtlessly what Hǫskuldr *Hvítanessgoði* has in mind when tension builds up between him and Njáll's sons. Hǫskuldr is advised

[43] *Nj*, p. 328. 'Behave bravely and speak not as if you were afraid.'
[44] *Nj*, p. 324. 'Everybody felt this was very grave, except Skarpheðinn. He asked the people not to bemoan or behave in any other abominable way which people might talk about. "We are expected to, more than others, to bear ourselves with dignity, and that is how it should be."'

by a friend to move his household to a safer place, to which he replies: 'Þá munu þat mæla sumir [...] at ek flýja þaðan fyrir hrælzlu sakir, ok vil ek þat eigi.'[45]

Unrestrained emotional expression is furthermore clearly criticized in the scene where Bergþóra fumingly whets her sons to avenge the insult of being called dung-beardlings. She exhibits her rage in the form of an uncontrolled rampage, referred to by the verb 'geisa'.[46] Mocking his mother's lack of restraint, Skarpheðinn calmly remarks that 'eigi hǫfu vér kvenna skap [...] at vér reiðimsk við ǫllu'[47] and thus implies how dishonourable it is for a man to lose control over his rage.

In this light, Flosi Þórðarson shows exemplary reactions when he learns of the killing of Hǫskuldr *Hvítanessgoði*: 'Flosi spyrr víg Hǫskulds, ok fær honum þat mikillar áhyggju ok reiði, ok var hann þó vel stilltr.'[48] Flosi's self-composed conduct when he hears this grave news, even though he is very anxious and angry, corresponds with the fact that not only is the extreme public emotional display of both women and men criticized in the saga but men are also applauded for showing emotional restraint. When they do so, their good reputation increases, and such restraint is portrayed as resulting in increased honour.

An example that illustrates this is that of the moderate and tempered chieftain Hrútr Herjólfsson, who is introduced as 'hógværr í skapi, manna vitrastur'.[49] He demonstrates that he is calm under pressure by being 'vel stilltr'[50] when he learns that his wife has left him, even though it is noted that he 'brá mjǫk í brún'.[51] A little boy makes fun of these misfortunes of Hrútr in marital affairs, and this generates much laughter among the household. While Hrútr's brother Hǫskuldr becomes angry at this and strikes the boy, Hrútr reacts with restraint and generosity. He pulls a ring off his finger and gives it to the boy, along with calm advice to not give offence ever again. The boy responds by remarking that he will always remember Hrútr's 'drengskapr',[52] and the

[45] *Nj*, p. 279. 'Then some people will say that I am running away because of fright, and I do not want that.'
[46] *Nj*, p. 114. On 'geisa', see Section 1.4.3.1.
[47] *Nj*, p. 114. 'I do not possess a woman's temper and become angry at anything.'
[48] *Nj*, p. 287. 'Flosi learns of the slaying of Hǫskuldr, and that causes him much worry (or anxiety) and anger, yet he remained even-tempered.'
[49] *Nj*, p. 6. 'Moderate in his temper, the wisest of men.'
[50] *Nj*, p. 26. 'Well self-composed.'
[51] *Nj*, p. 26. 'Was very taken aback.'
[52] *Nj*, p. 29. 'Decency/honour.'

narrator conveys that Hrútr's reputation and honour were increased by these tempered reactions: 'Af þessu fekk Hrútr gott orð.'[53]

Gunnarr Hámundarson's restraint is tested in multiple circumstances. While it is repeatedly noted that he gets angry, he does not act on his wife's numerous insults and incitements to violent retaliation[54] and is reluctant to give in to his opponents' repeated attempts to throw him off balance and provoke him to hasty reactions.[55] Instead, he generally responds to provocations with calmness, through settlements and legal cunning with the aid of Njáll[56] and by displaying generosity in response to provocation, just as Hrútr did in his interaction with the little boy.[57] Gunnarr's restrained reactions usually result in him receiving 'ina mestu sœmð'[58] and great envy from his adversaries.[59] As discussed in Section 1.3.1, it is clearly indicated that Gunnarr usually does not act impulsively when angry but has control over his wrathful reactions, and his anger is portrayed as just.[60] In this way, Gunnarr's anger follows the emotive script of royal anger, which serves to align his character with that of nobility.

Hence, the honourable man does not impulsively reveal his feelings but keeps his emotional reactions under strict control. He does not carry his heart on his sleeve but rather contains his despair, fright, anger, humiliation, and grief. Even joy at success, victory, and increased honour should be suppressed and not openly expressed as such, as discussed below in Section 7.3.3.

7.3 Emotive scripts

It would certainly seem to be the case that an honourable man should not display any feelings at all, but this is far from being borne out in the sagas. Suppression and restraint,

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[53] *Nj*, p. 29. 'Hrútr was acclaimed for this.'
[54] *Nj*, pp. 94, 98, 106, 117–18, 189. See further on Gunnarr's anger in Section 1.3.1.
[55] See, e.g., *Nj*, pp. 121–22, 151, 180.
[56] *Nj*, pp. 132–33; 151, 160–66.
[57] *Nj*, p. 122. When crop failure hits, Gunnarr is forced to turn to his neighbour, who angrily refuses to sell him hay and food. Gunnarr responds to this by granting the neighbour's wish to buy a slave from him.
[58] *Nj*, p. 146. 'The greatest honour.'
[59] *Nj*, p. 166.
[60] The exceptions are both his immediate infatuation at the first sight of Hallgerðr (*Nj*, pp. 85–87) leading to their marriage and the slap he later gives her (p. 124). Both of these reactions have troublesome consequences.

along with strong contempt towards loud, impulsive, and bodily expressions and the absolute disdain of the display of weaknesses, such as fright and despair, are only a part of the system of feelings that dictates the honourable expression of emotions within the saga. In much the same way as the emotional practice of female grief and anger is articulated in the ritual of whetting (Sections 6.2 and 6.3), the system of feelings within the saga community can stipulate that emotions should not be impulsively expressed at their initial occurrence but should be translated into action. What is of interest is *how*, and *what kind* of action and how individual characters in the narrative fit within this system. This can be described through 'emotive scripts', which Sif Rikhardsdottir defines as the 'literary representations of emotions' that 'dictate the rules for emotional behaviour within any given text, utilising narrative structures, verbal or behavioural cues and context'.[61]

In his study on eleventh- and twelfth-century narratives from France and England, Stephen White postulates that the display of various emotions of nobles in these narratives are 'incorporated into political postures and processes; it was part of an entire discourse of feuding or retaliatory disputing, which provided scripts or schemas for representing, interpreting, and experiencing competition for honor and other kinds of conflict'.[62] White argues that certain acts or performances are so 'intimately associated' with particular emotions that anger, for example, 'can be imputed to any human or supernatural being who takes revenge'.[63] On this basis, White outlines representational scripts of the display of anger, shame, grief, and joy among his sources.[64] While the textual material that White analyses is of different cultural origin than the texts that are the subject of the present study, and therefore, the results are fundamentally different, White's approach is useful for the present purpose as it provides a fitting perspective for analysing and describing the proper emotional display among a distinct emotional community through scripts.

[61] Sif Rikhardsdottir, *Emotions in Old Norse Literature*, p. 28.
[62] White, 'Politics of Anger', p. 146.
[63] Ibid., p. 138. This is in the same vein as Carol Clover's association between lamenting and whetting; see Section 6.2.1 and Clover, 'Hildigunnr's Lament'.
[64] White, 'Politics of Anger', pp. 142–45.

7.3.1 Retribution and just retaliation

As noted above, unrestrained emotional expression is clearly criticized in the scene in which Bergþóra fumingly whets her sons to avenge the insult of being called dung-beardlings. Skarpheðinn mocks his mother for her uncontrolled display of anger and acts as if he himself is indifferent. However, the reader is made well aware that Skarpheðinn is, in fact, seething with rage; his anger distends to his face, which develops red patches, and it even bulges out of his body in the form of sweat on his forehead.[65] His brother Grímr is similarly angry but restrained, as he silently sits and bites his lip. Their father Njáll advises calm reactions.[66]

While this scene clearly emphasizes restraint, the brothers' feelings of anger are communicated with their action that very same night. When Njáll and Bergþóra retire for the evening, they hear a ringing noise coming from Skarpheðinn's axe, as their sons all leave the house in full armament and head into the night to avenge the humiliation. Skarpheðinn goes on to slice off the head of the speaker of the insult with his axe.[67] Njáll is pleased when he hears of this and exclaims 'njótið heilir handa!'[68]

Similarly, Gunnarr acts with calm indifference when he learns that he is accused of having cried and simply remarks: 'Ekki skulu vit vera orðsjúkir.'[69] However, at home, his mother Rannveig notes that she has never seen him so angry before.[70] Gunnarr's rage is conveyed through action that same evening. Rannveig hears Gunnarr's halberd make a loud ringing noise as he puts on full armament — another projection of angry feelings through the sound of a weapon being readied for action, as in the case of Skarpheðinn's axe. Gunnarr rides into the night and kills the speaker of the insult by thrusting his halberd through his body. Afterwards, Njáll describes Gunnarr's actions as justified and excusable because he had been severely tried: 'hefir þú verið mjǫk at þreyttr.'[71] A

[65] *Nj*, p. 114.
[66] *Nj*, p. 114. Njáll recites a proverb; 'kemsk, þó at seint fari, húsfreyja', which essentially means 'one can go slowly but still achieve the goal, mistress'.
[67] *Nj*, p. 117.
[68] *Nj*, p. 117. 'Bless your hands', or 'well done', which is an idiom literally meaning 'enjoy, blessed, your hands'.
[69] *Nj*, p. 136. 'We shall not be overly sensitive to words [lit. word-sick].'
[70] *Nj*, p. 136.
[71] *Nj*. p. 139. 'You have been severely tried.'

settlement is reached, and Gunnarr eventually receives great honour from the whole affair.[72]

The above examples not only represent the numerous instances in the saga that demonstrate how closely anger and retaliation are knitted together in the text but also depict an applauded and honourable expression of rage and humiliation. The honourable practice is to suppress the initial occurrence of these emotions and to channel them into retribution to restore one's reputation, by blood if necessary.

It is imperative, however, that the vengeance comes upon the right person. The two scenes above are examples of retributions that are deemed just and have a successful, honourable outcome. Vengeance must be equitable, or it risks being considered dishonourable, and the slayer might be considered to be 'ójafnaðarmaðr',[73] one who does not have a sense of equivalence and justice in feuds and displays overbearing aggression and thus behaves dishonourably.[74] As is emphasized in the thirteenth-century wisdom poem *Hugsvinnsmál*, hasty temper should be reserved for necessity only:[75]

> Blíðr þú vert
> en stundum bráðskapaðr,
> ef geraz þarfir þess.[76]

Unsuccessful retribution is considered disgraceful; thus, not having control of one's temper can result in two different dishonourable outcomes: an unjust slaying or an unsuccessful one. This behavioural code is manifested in many Old Norse texts. In the mid-thirteenth-century *Konungs skuggsjá,* the following is advised:

> Verðu sjálfr sem spakastr, ok þó svá at eigi þolir þú skemdir eða stóra brigzlastaði fyrir ofbleyði sakar. En þóat nauðsynligar sakar þröngvi þik til

[72] *Nj*. p. 146.
[73] Literally an 'un-even man' or an unjust man.
[74] See, e.g., Byock, *Viking Age Iceland*, pp. 190–91; Vésteinn Ólason, *Dialogues*, p. 157.
[75] The poem is an Old Norse adaptation or translation of *Disticha Catonis*, a fourth-century educational Latin text, widespread in the western medieval world; see Hermann Pálsson, *Hávamál í ljósi íslenskrar menningar*, pp. 30–32. On the poem's dating to the thirteenth century, see Wills and Gropper, '(Introduction to) Anonymous, *Hugsvinnsmál*', p. 358.
[76] *SkP* VII, pp. 374–75. 'Be tender, but sometimes of hasty temper if it becomes necessary.'

> úspektar, þá gersk þú eigi bráðr í hefndum fyrr en þú sér, at vel verði framgengt ok þar komi niðr sem makligt er.[77]

The text warns against the danger of harming one's reputation even further if one's temper is not contained resulting in the revenge becoming unjust or unsuccessful.

Accordingly, in *Njáls saga*, Sveinn criticizes his father, Jarl Hákon, for being angry at Njáll's sons, whom he believes are innocent of hiding *Víga*-Hrappr aboard their ship: 'Undarligt [skaplyndi][78] er þat at láta óverða menn gjalda reiði sinnar.'[79] It would certainly be dishonourable for Jarl Hákon to unleash his wrathful retribution on innocent men. This is also the conception behind Njáll's advice to his sons at a critical moment when he counsels them to restrain their rage and wait to act upon it with vengeful actions in the build-up towards their slaying of Þráinn Sigfússon: 'Þat kann ok vera, at mælt sé, at synir mínir sé seinir til atgerða, ok skuluð þér þat þola um stund, því at allt orkar tvímælis, þá gǫrt er.'[80]

Njáll wisely counsels his sons to wait and ensure that Þráinn has recited enough slander about them and that enough people have heard it before they act; otherwise, the killing would be considered unjust. The same notion is at play in the scene where Skammkell, Otkell, and his brothers summon Gunnarr for the payment of compensation.[81] The summoning is meant to humiliate Gunnarr, who has already generously offered them their own choice of compensation. Gunnarr becomes 'inn reiðasti'[82] when they summon him. He relates the events to his brother Kolskeggr, who immediately becomes agitated and regrets that he was not there to profoundly disgrace the summoners on the spot. Gunnarr, however, restrains his anger and replies to his brother: 'Hvat bíðr sinnar stundar.'[83] Gunnarr then goes on to seek the advice of Njáll and Hrútr on how he should proceed. Cunningly, they have the information leaked out

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[77] *Konungs-skuggsjá*, ed. by Keyser, Unger, and Munch, pp. 8–9. 'Be as calm as can be, though not to the point of suffering damage or accusations of cowardice. But if necessity forces you to immoderation, then do not become too hasty to avenge until you are sure that it will be successful and that it will strike those who deserve it.'
[78] Variant from AM 133 fol. (Kálfalækjarbók), *c*. 1300.
[79] *Nj*. p. 219. 'It is a peculiar disposition to have, to let innocent men suffer one's anger.'
[80] *Nj*, p. 226. 'It can be that people will say that my sons are slow to act, and you should put up with that for a while, because every deed is disputable after it has been done.'
[81] *Nj*, p. 130.
[82] *Nj*, p. 130. 'Very angry.'
[83] *Nj*, p. 130. 'Everything must wait its time.'

that Gunnarr intends to react by charging the chieftain Gizurr *hvíti* to a duel, but Gizurr has been drawn into this case against his will.[84] The mere possibility of this duel is enough for the other side to shamefully surrender completely, and the matter results in much honour for Gunnarr.[85] The affair demonstrates the same emotive script at play as above, but blood vengeance becomes unnecessary. The anger is practised through the mere *threat* of violence and disgrace and through political manipulation.

This emotive script further reflects the practices of King Haraldr *hárfagri*, which are described thus in *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar*: 'at huert sinn er skiot æði eðr reiði liop á hann, at hann stilti sik fyrst ok let sva renna af ser reiðina. en leít siþan á sakar v reiðr.'[86] When Flosi learns of the killing of Hǫskuldr *Hvítanessgoði* in *Njáls saga*, his friend Runólfr strongly advises Flosi to consider matters without anger to avoid devastating consequences: 'Þess vil ek nú biðja þik [...] at þú gefir ró reiði ok takir þat upp, at minnst vandræði hljótist af.'[87] The above examples all demonstrate how considerations of honour condition emotional behaviour and how the depictions of anger and humiliation are intimately connected to the social and political discourse in the saga.

Perhaps no character in *Njáls saga* better represents the emotive script of translating intense emotions into just and controlled retaliation than the relentless avenger Kári Sǫlmundarson. After Kári escapes the burning of Bergþórshváll as the sole survivor, he rides to Mǫrðr Valgarðsson and tells him what has happened. 'Hann aumkaði [harmaði][88] mjǫk. Kári kvað annat karlmannligra en gráta þá dauða ok bað hann safna liði.'[89] Here, Mǫrðr expresses grief, but Kári reprimands him and reminds him of the script that dictates that such expression is demeaning, whereas channelling such feelings into retribution is the right and manly thing to do.

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[84] *Nj*, p. 131.
[85] *Nj*, p. 133.
[86] *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar en mesta*, p. 15. 'Each time a sudden rage or anger came over him, he first composed himself and then let the anger pass, and afterwards reviewed the offence without anger.' This conforms with Ármann Jakobsson's listing of the royal virtues conveyed in Old Norse *konungasǫgur*, the two most important ones being moderation and strength; see Ármann Jakobsson, *Í leit að konungi*, pp. 222–28.
[87] *Nj*, p. 289. 'I ask of you now, that you give your rage a rest and react in the way which will lead to the least trouble.'
[88] 'Aumkaði' in M, 'harmaði' in R, Kálfalækjarbók and Gráskinna. See *Njála: Udgivet efter gamle håndskrifter*, ed. by Konráð Gíslason and Eiríkur Jónsson, p. 68 2n.
[89] *Nj*, p. 339. 'He took great pity [grieved greatly]. Kári said that other things were more manly than to cry for the dead and asked him to gather a troop of men.'

In Kári's years-long task of hunting down the burners of Bergþórshváll and killing them one by one, he strictly follows the code of being *jafnaðarmaðr*, to the point that he wakes up the men he is about to attack from their sleep and patiently waits while they gather their weapons before attacking and killing them.[90] While conducting his vengeance, he is calm and keeps his composure. It is noted that '[a]ldri ámælti hann óvinum sínum, ok aldri heitaðisk hann við þá'.[91] Commenting on Kári's honourable choices in his pursuit for vengeance, Flosi remarks with admiration: 'Fám mǫnnum er Kári líkr, ok þann veg vilda ek helzt skapfarinn vera sem hann er.'[92] Furthermore, Kári notably expresses his emotions through poetry, which is addressed below.

7.3.2 Expression in poetry

Skaldic poetry in the sagas conveys feelings more openly than the prose, and the speakers analyse their own feelings to a higher degree compared to the prose, as discussed in Section 1.3.4. The expression of one's feelings in poetry is portrayed within the narrative as an honourable practice. Kári Sǫlmundarson is a knightly, impeccable hero, with beautiful long hair, a golden helmet, a golden spear, and a shield with an illustration of a lion.[93] He enters the saga from abroad in its latter half, becomes a close friend of Njáll's sons, and marries their sister Helga. As their ally, he participates in the feuds that lead up to the burning. His young son burns to death in Bergþórshváll with his grandparents, but Kári escapes with his hair and clothes in flames. Kári spends the next years relentlessly pursuing and killing the burners, one after another. Kári's feelings and motivation for his persistent years-long vengeance are specifically made intelligible to the reader through his poetry, which communicates his anxiety, grief, and anger.

When Gizurr notes that it is very lucky that Kári escaped the burning, Kári makes it clear that in his mind there is no relief associated with the incident.

> Hjálmskassa fór hvessir,
> herðimeiðr, af reiði
> út ór elris sveita
> ófúss Níals húsa,

[90] *Nj*, p. 417.
[91] *Nj*, p. 346. 'He never blamed his enemies and never made any threats against them.'
[92] *Nj*, p. 422. 'Few men are like Kári, and his character is the one I would most like to have.'
[93] *Nj*, pp. 203, 231.

> þá er eld-Gunnar inni
> óðrunnar þar brunnu;
> menn nemi mál sem ek inni
> mín; harmsakir tínum.[94]
>
> (Hjálmskassa hvessir fór ófúss, af reiði, út ór elris sveita Níals húsa, herðimeðr, þá er óðrunnar eld-Gunnar brunnu þar inni; menn nemi mál mín sem ek inni; harmsakir tínum.
>
> The sharpener of the axe [> MAN (Kári)] went unwilling — because of anger — out of the sweat of the alder [> SMOKE] of Njáll's houses, warrior, while the fierce trees of the fire-Valkyrie [> SWORD > FIERCE WARRIORS (Njáll's sons?)] burnt there inside; men should understand my words as I tell them; I recount the cause of my sorrow/tragedy.)

Kári does not seem to feel lucky at all. On the contrary, he directly expresses in the stanza how stricken he is by the feelings of anger and grief because of the burning of Njáll, whom he names specifically. The use of the third-person when referring to himself as 'the sharpener of the axe' who went unwillingly out of the fire emphasizes his vengeful intentions, insinuating that this role is imposed upon him by the gravity of the matter, and if it were not so, he would rather have chosen to die. Moreover, it can be inferred from the two last lines of the poem that he wants his sentiments broadcast. Gizurr responds by refraining from discussing the matter further:

> Þá mælti Gizurr: „Várkunn er þat, at þér sé minnisamt, ok skulu vit nú ekki um tala fleira at sinni." Kári sagði, at hann ætlaði þá heim at ríða.[95]

Gizurr spares Kári further talk about the incident in the style of restraint and repression of emotions that runs through the saga. Nevertheless, it is made even more clear how painful it is for Kári to speak about this for he is eager to leave his friend immediately and ride home. Kári is indeed portrayed as traumatized and grieved by the burning. He is constantly thinking of it and of the death of Njáll and his family. He expresses his anxiety in a stanza, when his friend Ásgrímr notices that, night after night, Kári is unable to sleep.

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[94] *Nj*, p. 354.
[95] *Nj*, p. 354. 'Then Gizurr said: "It is understandable that this is memorable to you, and we shall not speak more of this now." Kári said that he would ride home.'

> Svá er at segja frá Kára, at hann mátti ekki sofa of nætr. Ásgrímr vaknaði nótt eina ok heyrði, at Kári vakði. Ásgrímr mælti: „Hvárt verðr ekki svefnsamt of nætrnar?“ Kári kvað þá vísu:[96]
>
> Kemrat, Ullr, um alla,
> álmsíma, mér grímu,
> beðhlíðar man ek beiði
> bauga, svefn á augu,
> síz brandviðir brenndu
> bǫðvar nausts á hausti,
> ek em at mínu meini
> minnigr, Níal inni.[97]
>
> (Svefn kemrat á augu mér um alla grímu, Ullr álmsíma — ek man beiði bauga beðhlíðar — síz brandviðir bǫðvar nausts brenndu Níal inni á hausti; ek em minnigr at mínu meini.
>
> Sleep does not fall upon my eyes the whole night, bowstring's *Ullr* [> WARRIOR], — I think about the challenger of the bed-slope of rings [>SHIELD> WARRIOR (Njáll)] — ever since the trees of the fire of the battle boat-house [SHIELD > SWORD > WARRIORS] burnt Njáll inside in the autumn; I am mindful/remembering my grievance.)

Both the poetry and the conversations relay how the image of burnt Njáll has haunted Kári since the night of the fire and how unable he is to free himself from the traumatic memories of it. His emotional torments are also displayed through his body, which in this instance, can be read as an 'actor and instrument' in the emotional practice occurring in the two scenes.[98] Kári's anxiety is conveyed through his physical restlessness, as he is unable to fall asleep on account of his traumatic feelings. The poetic voice allows him to express these emotions in words to his comrades, which otherwise are not discussed openly.

7.3.3 The honourable practice of joy at success

While it is honourable to express joy at a loved one's return — through hospitality and gestures, such as kissing and hugging, but mainly noted by the word 'feginn' (see Section

[96] *Nj*, pp. 345–46. 'It is to tell of Kári, that he could not sleep at night. Ásgrímr woke up one night and heard that Kári was awake. Ásgrímr spoke: "Can you not sleep at night?" Kári then recited a stanza.'
[97] *Nj*, pp. 345–46.
[98] Scheer, 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice', pp. 200–01. See Section 6.1 on reading bodies.

1.2.3) — joy at success, victory, and increased honour should be fully repressed by an honourable man of high status. He should never boast but should either be silent or channel his satisfaction into the display of humility and generosity.

Gunnarr Hámundarson's demeanour provides fitting examples of this. There is an elegant joyful aura over Gunnarr when he has avenged the accusation of having cried, and it is indicated through his gestures that he is rather pleased with himself. He rides valiantly home after the deed, jumps off his horse, and lands standing on his feet. However, when Kolskeggr implies his admiration, Gunnarr replies: 'Hvat ek veit […] hvárt ek mun því óvaskari maðr en aðrir menn sem mér þykkir meira fyrir en ǫðrum mǫnnum at vega menn.'[99] While Gunnarr's demeanour conveys that he feels the results of his business were pleasing and just, his words convey no such thing, but simply his sadness of having regrettably been forced to kill. On another occasion, Gunnarr receives great honour from the king of Denmark and Jarl Hákon in his journey abroad. Though his honour has greatly increased, it is specifically noted that when he and Kolskeggr come home, they were kind to their household and 'hafði ekki vaxit dramb þeira'. [100] Kolskeggr suggests Gunnarr should ride to the Althing to enjoy his increased honour, but Gunnarr replies: 'Lítt hefi ek þat skap haft […] at hrósa mér, en gott þykki mér at finna góða menn.'[101]

As a supporting character, Kolskeggr has the narrative function in these scenes to mirror Gunnarr and tease out the reader's admiration of him. Kolskeggr's brotherly eyes project an elevated view of Gunnarr, and their conversations function as an occasion for Gunnarr to exercise the honourable emotional practice of suppressing his joy and displaying humbleness instead.

Correspondingly, when Njáll congratulates Gunnarr on his victories and increased honour, Gunnarr does not display joy but reacts by humbly conveying his gratitude to Njáll.[102] As for Kári, it is noted that he never speaks poorly about his enemies while he hunts them down one by one in his relentless retribution.[103]

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[99] *Nj*, pp. 138–39. 'I do not know if I am less valiant than other men, because it troubles me more than other men to kill people.'
[100] *Nj*, p. 84. 'They had not become haughty.'
[101] *Nj*, p. 84. 'I have not had the temperament to boast of myself, but I enjoy meeting good people.'
[102] *Nj*, p. 68.
[103] *Nj*, p. 346. 'Aldri ámælti hann óvinum sínum, ok aldri heitaðisk hann við þá.' (He never blamed his enemies and never made any threats against them.)

In contrast, both Hallgerðr and two villains are said to express joy at their successful ill deeds. Thus, it is noted that 'Hallgerðr hœldisk jafnan af vígi Svarts, en Bergþóru líkaði þat illa'.[104] Hallgerðr expresses malicious joy when ridiculing Njáll for his lack of beard and instigates spiteful laughter at Njáll's expense among her household.[105] Gunnarr's killers boast of their deed: '[Hróaldr] hrósaði því, at hann hefði veitt Gunnari banasár […] Þorgeirr Starkaðarson hrósaði ǫðru sári, at hann hefði sært Gunnar.'[106] Their boasting is insinuated to be disgraceful by the narrator, who goes on to recount that 'Víg Gunnars mæltisk illa fyrir um allar sveitir, ok var hann mǫrgum mǫnnum mjǫk harmdauði'.[107] In this way, the demeanour of Gunnarr's killers is contrasted unfavourably with the public view.

7.3.4 Christian expressions

Temperance or restraint (*hófsemi*) is one of the four cardinal virtues (along with wisdom, justice, and strength) that the Carolingian theologian Alcuin (c*a*. 735–804) promotes. *Hófsemi* is explained in an early thirteenth-century Old Norse version of his *De virtutibus et vitiis* as follows: 'at [maðr] ælſci ækci of mioc. ne hafe at hattre. hældr ſtilli hann allar ymiſar girndir þeſſa liff með alitlegom athuga.'[108]

Though not particularly addressing emotions, Hermann Pálsson attributes the general emphasis on moderation in the sagas to the Christian influences on them.[109] Theodore Andersson, however, associates the theme of moderation with secular social ideals prevailing in the saga world and draws a parallel to the emphasis placed on moderation in the traditional wisdom poem *Hávamál*, which is based on pre-Christian

[104] *Nj*, p. 95. 'Hallgerðr often boasted about the slaying of Svartr, but Bergþóra thought ill of that.'
[105] *Nj*, p. 113.
[106] *Nj*, p. 191. 'Hróaldr boasted that he given Gunnarr his death blow, Þorgeirr Starkaðarson praised himself for another wound that he had given to Gunnarr.'
[107] Nj. p. 191. 'The slaying of Gunnarr was denounced in every region, and he was mourned very much by many.'
[108] Alcuin, *De virtutibus et vitiis i norsk-islandsk overlevering*, p. 131. 'A man should not love too much, nor hate, but he should temper all of this life's desires with diligence.' See more on this text in Section 4.1. On the relationship between scenes in *Njáls saga* and theological texts on anger, see Hermann Pálsson, *Uppruni Njálu og hugmyndir*, pp. 49–52.
[109] Hermann Pálsson, 'Icelandic Sagas and Medieval Ethics'; Hermann Pálsson, *Uppruni Njálu og hugmyndir*.

values.[110] Of course, the emphasis on moderation in emotional expression is much older than Christianity. The restraint of feelings was a fundamental theme in the ancient philosophical tradition, as Simo Knuuttila has amply demonstrated, and all subsequent medieval thinkers and authors have emphasized that one 'should keep emotions under strict control'.[111]

In the case of emotional depiction in *Njáls saga*, however, it might be more productive to view the Old Norse secular and Christian ideologies less in terms of a dichotomy and more as co-existing and interacting views. Many of the sagas, and perhaps particularly *Njáls saga*, describe the intersection and parallel existence of pagan and Christian ideologies, which manifest side by side in the text, sometimes interacting and sometimes clashing.[112] The dialectic relationship between secular and Christian emotive scripts can be demonstrated through the comparison of the emotional practices of the pagan Gunnarr Hámundarson, on one hand, and the Christian Hallr from Síða, on the other. While both characters are emotionally self-composed and moderate, this is illustrated in the narrative through different emotive scripts.

Gunnarr follows the main script of honourable secular men of high status: to restrain the occurrence of intense feelings and articulate them through action that has the political aim of maintaining his honour, by means of vengeance by blood if necessary. Hallr from Síða likewise suppresses and restrains his emotions but channels them into something quite different.

Hallr is the first character in the saga to be baptized as a Christian and aids the missionary Þangbrandr in the first Christian mission in Iceland.[113] *Njáls saga* describes how Hallr plays a crucial part in the peaceful introduction of Christianity at the Althing, by commissioning the pagan Þorgeirr *Ljósvetningagoði* to rule on the dispute of the conversion,[114] which resulted in a successfully peaceful outcome. Hallr is described by the

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[110] Andersson, 'The Displacement of the Heroic Ideal', pp. 589–93. Indeed, other studies have demonstrated that moderation is one of the fundamental concepts in the philosophy of *Hávamál*. Óttar M. Norðfjörð analyses this in Section 3.1 in 'Heimspeki Hávamála'. See also Hermann Pálsson's analysis of the general ideology presented in *Hávamál* in his *Hávamál í ljósi íslenskrar menningar*.

[111] Knuuttila, 'Emotion', p. 437. See a closer discussion in *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, pp. 111–76.

[112] See, e.g., Vésteinn Ólason, *Dialogues*, p. 225.

[113] *Nj*, p. 257.

[114] *Nj*, p. 271.

narrator as 'vitr maðr ok góðgjarn'.[115] He is a conciliatory figure, constantly encouraging moderation, and his efforts to reconcile dividing parties are repeatedly noted.[116] His conciliatory spirit is associated with his faith in the text. In his efforts to reach a reconciliation after the murder of Hǫskuldr *Hvítanessgoði*, he pleads to all of the people to contribute to the settlement by referring to the Christian God: 'Er þat bœnarstaðr minn til allrar alþýðu, at nǫkkurn hlut gefi til fyrir guðs sakir.'[117] Hallr's son becomes a victim in the aftermath of the burning when he is slain by Njáll's adversaries.[118] Hallr, however, makes a surprising offer to facilitate peace after the burning of Bergþórshváll:

> „Allir menn vitu, hvern harm ek hefi fingit, at Ljótr, son minn, er látinn. […] En ek vil vinna þat til sætta at leggja son minn ógildan ok ganga þó til at veita þeim bæði tryggðir ok grið, er mínir mótstǫðumenn eru." […] varð rómr mikill ok góðr gǫrr at máli hans, ok lofuðu allir mjǫk hans góðgirnd.[119]

Hallr begins by stating his sorrow over the loss of his son. He has a rightful claim to compensation or to take vengeance if a settlement is not reached. However, Hallr goes on to declare that, even though he has suffered grief, he will put his feelings aside for the sake of peace, despite the fact that his emotions could very well — according to the emotive script that Gunnarr follows — be expressed through the practice of retaliation. Simultaneously, Hallr emphasizes moderation, sacrifice, and reconciliation. Hallr is praised for this act and receives 'ina mestu sœmð'.[120] Hallr eventually receives four-fold reparations for his son, which further underlines the positive view of his act from the perspective of the public.

The articulation of Hallr's grief through sacrifice with the aim of reconciliation is unquestionably a Christian idea and contradicts the honourable virtue of holding one's ground and being prepared to defend one's honour at all costs. That is the morality that Gunnarr upholds when he claims, as a revenant, that he wanted to die rather than to

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[115] *Nj*, p. 297. 'Wise and benevolent'.
[116] *Nj*, pp. 297, 312, 318, 362, 412, 419, 421.
[117] *Nj*, p. 312. 'It is my plea to all people that they give something, for the sake of God.'
[118] *Nj*, p. 408.
[119] *Nj*, pp. 411–12. '"Everybody knows of the sorrow that I am inflicted with on account of my son Ljótr now being dead. But I am willing, for the sake of reconciliation, to have him be uncompensated for, but still give pledge and truce to my adversaries." His words were met with loud and good acclaim, and everybody praised his good will very much.'
[120] *Nj*, 422. 'The greatest honour.'

yield to his enemies.[121] Despite this, Hallr's act is not considered to be unmanly or shameful. His honour does not diminish but, on the contrary, increases. The scene directly relates to one of the central themes of *Njáls saga*, about the often-devastating consequences of blood feuds. In that context, Hallr's emotional practice represents an endorsement of compromise and diplomacy above defending one's honour at any cost.

As Vilhjálmur Árnason writes, Hallr's actions are 'revolutionary because they break with the "old morality" of *sœm[ð]* and shame'.[122] His emotional practice can be illustrated with reference to what Bjørn Bandlien describes as the emergence of the Christian ideal of 'rational, tempered and civilized' masculinity.[123] Carol Clover proposes that the 'new order' brought by the introduction of Latin Christendom in the north instigated a 'remapping' of gender roles:

> [I]t seems indisputably the case that as Norse culture assimilated notions of weeping monks and fainting knights, "masculinity" was rezoned, as it were, into territories previously occupied by "effeminacy"'.[124]

Bandlien, however, argues in his study on Old Norse masculinities that this process was not immediate but gradual and that Christian and secular discourses of masculinity co-existed following the conversion and do not appear in the sources as completely incompatible.[125] This seems to be the case regarding the contrast in the emotive scripts of Hallr and Gunnarr (the latter being what most other heroes of *Njáls saga* follow). Despite the disparity between the scripts, both result in enhanced honour for the characters, while they nevertheless represent different aspects of what it means to be honourable, which directly relates to the centrality of the themes of feuds and honour in the saga.

Christian themes also contribute to Njáll's emotional practice. He is the first person in the saga to react positively towards the possible conversion to Christianity: 'Svá lízk mér sem inn nýi átrúnaðr muni vera miklu betri, ok sá mun sæll, er þann fær

[121] *Nj*, p. 193.
[122] Vilhjálmur Árnason, 'An Ethos in Transformation', p. 236.
[123] Bandlien, 'Man or Monster?', p. 164.
[124] Clover, 'Regardless of Sex', p. 17.
[125] Bandlien, 'Man or Monster?', p. 178.

heldr.'[126] He is also among the first people to convert.[127] Njáll represents the figure of a wise counsellor.[128] He is prophetic, extremely knowledgeable in law, and is introduced as wise and 'heilráðr ok góðgjarn [...] hógværr og drenglyndr'.[129] He is an esteemed person at the head of society, not through his physical strength and fighting skills, but through the power resulting from his cunning intelligence, political abilities, and legal knowledge. As this powerful counselling figure, Njáll would be expected above others to show emotional restraint.[130] Not once is it noted in the saga that Njáll becomes angry, even when he is ridiculed for his lack of a beard. He never resorts to physical retribution in person when his honour is attacked, but rather facilitates retribution on his own behalf or applies duplicitous manipulations to achieve his goal, always self-possessed in his actions.[131]

Moreover, Njáll is somewhat effeminized through his lack of a beard, which is used to provoke and insult him and his family on more than one occasion.[132] In his detailed analysis of Njáll's masculinity and character, Ármann Jakobsson argues that Njáll is 'established as a counterpoint to the aggressive masculine symbols, such as mighty weapons and beards'.[133] This also manifests in his emotional expression, for the emotional display of Njáll is surprisingly unfettered and effeminate on occasion. Thus, he is noted to be repeatedly moved to tears (*kløkkna*) when he speaks about the tragic events that he knows through his foresight will follow from the slaying of Hǫskuldr *Hvítanessgoði*: 'Sjá einn hlutr var svá, at Njáli fell svo nær, at hann mátti aldri ókløkkvandi um tala.'[134]

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[126] *Nj*, p. 255. 'It seems to me that the new faith is much better, and the one who takes it up will be happy.'
[127] *Nj*, p. 261.
[128] On this figure, see Lönnroth, *Njáls Saga: A Critical Introduction*, pp. 61–66; Vilhjálmur Árnason, 'An Ethos in Transformation', pp. 234–37.
[129] *Nj*, p. 57. 'Of sound advice and benevolent [...] moderate and noble-minded.'
[130] On how powerful advice-givers were, above others, expected to demonstrate the virtue of 'hófsemi' (moderation), see Byock, *Viking Age Iceland*, pp. 190–92.
[131] On Njáll's manipulations, see Tirosh, 'Víga-Njáll'.
[132] On Njáll's beardlessness, in particular, see Künzler, *Flesh and Word*, pp. 142–54; Ármann Jakobsson, 'Masculinity and Politics', pp. 195–98.
[133] Ármann Jakobsson, 'Masculinity and Politics', p. 201.
[134] *Nj*, p. 281. 'This was the only thing that Njáll took so to heart that he could never speak about it without being moved to tears.'

Crying is not considered manly in the sagas,[135] and Njáll's tearful expression of his emotions stands in contrast with the offence of both Gunnarr and the friends of Skarpheðinn when they are accused of having cried.[136] Njáll's display resembles more the notion of the effeminate 'weeping monks' that Clover notes. Furthermore, Njáll is the only character in *Njáls saga* who speaks in an unrestrained way in his direct speech about his inner feelings:

> ek unna meira Hǫskuldi en sonum mínum, ok er ek spurða at hann var veginn, þótti mér sløkkt it sœtasta ljós augna minna.[137]

Such unrestrained emotional talk in direct speech is very unusual in the sagas. The metaphor and choice of words are highly clerical. 'Sœtr' is associated with clerical lexis, here applied with the meaning 'tender' or 'heartfelt'.[138] The expression 'ljós augna minna' derives from the Vulgate[139] and has parallels in many Christian texts, such as the Old Norse translation of Hugh of St. Victor's *Soliloquium de arrha animae* in *Hauksbók*.[140] As Vésteinn Ólason argues, this passage in *Njáls saga* 'unquestionably reflects the influence of religious literature' on *Njáls saga*.[141]

The examples of Hallr and Njáll and how they break with the emotive scripts manifested in the behaviour of other honourable high-status men of the saga can be assumed to reflect the intersection of pagan and Christian ideologies brought on by the emergence of Latin Christendom in the north and the resulting evolution of the ideologies behind what constitutes honourable emotional practices.[142] In both Hallr's and

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[135] On effeminisation involved in crying in *Njáls saga*, see Ármann Jakobsson, 'Masculinity and Politics', pp. 201–05.
[136] *Nj*, pp. 136, 333.
[137] *Nj*, p. 309. 'I loved Hǫskuldr more than any of my sons, and when I learned that he had been slain, I felt like the most heartfelt light of my eyes had been put out.'
[138] See 'sœtr' in *ONP registre*; Einar Ól. Sveinsson in *Nj*, p. 309 n2; Lönnroth, *Njáls Saga: A Critical Introduction*, pp. 113–14.
[139] As Einar Ól. Sveinsson first showed; see *Nj*, p. 309 n2 and Lönnroth, *Njáls Saga: A Critical Introduction*, pp. 113–14. The reference is from Psalms 37:11 (38:10 in Masoretic numbering).
[140] *Hauksbók*, p. 326; Rowe, 'Literary, Codicological, and Political Perspectives on Hauksbók', p. 59. Further parallels are listed, e.g., by Einar Ól. Sveinsson in *Nj*, p. 309 n2; Lönnroth, *Njáls Saga: A Critical Introduction*, pp. 113–14.
[141] Vésteinn Ólason, *Dialogues*, p. 114.
[142] In the case of masculinity, Bandlien argues that, as Christianity was introduced, the issue was not that former ideas of masculinity were being replaced, 'but the Church presented an alternative central place […] The co-existence of the Christian and secular laws in the eleventh

Njáll's cases, their expressions are not portrayed as unmanly or dishonourable but are rather presented as noble alternatives that are not necessarily incompatible with the other emotive scripts of honourable men.

7.4 Conclusion

The aim of this section was to identify and describe the exalted emotional expression among the emotional community of elite characters in the sagas. This was done by examining how characters' temperaments are described, by probing the public opinion expressed in the saga about the ideal and deplored emotional practices, and by identifying the emotive scripts at play. Furthermore, I discussed the fit of individual characters with the prevalent systems of feelings emerging from the analysis.

The most noticeable results are how much emphasis is placed on restraint and the repression of extreme bodily and impulsive emotional displays. The words employed to describe the temperament and emotional disposition of the most prominent heroes of the saga emphasize above all how self-possessed, even-tempered, and moderate they are. In contrast, the villains of the saga are characterized by a lack of restraint and moderation. In addition, the public discourse about the appropriate expression of feelings reveals a distaste for extreme bodily emotional reactions, which are portrayed as a threat to a man's honour. The honourable man does not impulsively reveal his emotions but suppresses a whole spectrum of feelings, in particular, despair and fright but also anger, grief, contempt, and joy.

While there is a strong emphasis on restraining the initial occurrence of various types of emotions, distinct emotive scripts stipulate the appropriate articulation of the feelings of honourable men. These scripts are intimately connected in the narrative to the pursuit of honour. The noble expression of anger and grief — after the initial impact of these emotions has been suppressed — is to take just action to restore one's reputation, through vengeance by blood if necessary. The suppression of the first movement of these feelings is portrayed as essential to prevent hasty reactions because an unjust or unsuccessful retaliation would result in diminished honour. An honourable

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and early twelfth centuries were not marked by competitiveness between the two legal cultures, but rather more of a complement to the other. This element of compatibility of the two world-views and discourses of masculinity probably eased the conversion for many men.' Bandlien, 'Man or Monster?', p. 178.

man does not display his joy when his honour increases but channels it into humility and generosity.

Christian emotive scripts can be identified through the depiction of characters who have turned to the new faith. These scripts allow for a more unrestrained display of grief, through tears and intimate expressions in direct speech. In Hallr's case, grief is channelled into humbleness and sacrifice in place of retaliation. Although this type of emotional practice can be considered effeminizing, it is portrayed in the saga as a noble alternative and arguably reflects the intersection of pagan and Christian ideologies in relation to honourable emotional practice.

As expected, expression in poetry is portrayed as an appropriate emotional display by honourable men. The noble Kári Sǫlmundarson conveys his intimate feelings of anxiety, grief, and anger through his poetry, which resonates with the finding that the poetic voice allows for an internal perspective and intimate communication of feelings.[143]

While the emotive scripts described here can be viewed as a representational outline of what is considered ideal emotional practice within the emotional community of the elite, no major character in *Njáls saga* is one-sided. The characters mostly align themselves on a spectrum within the scripts as the events of the narrative unfold, as their temperament is tested, and as different scripts come to play. For example, Flosi Þórðarson is an honourable chieftain and, overall, is shown in a sympathetic light in the saga. However, he occasionally loses his temper and composure.[144] These characteristics are insinuated by his introduction as 'manna kappsamastr'.[145] More often, though, it is noted that Flosi's emotional display and reactions are restrained and tempered. When Flosi learns of Hǫskuldr's slaying, it 'fær honum þat mikillar áhyggju ok reiði, ok var hann þó vel stilltr'.[146] It is noted that he never boasts about the burning nor displays any fear of retribution, and it is stated that he never utters a word of spite towards Kári or his

[143] See Section 1.3.4 on poetry and emotions in *Egils saga*.
[144] See Flosi's wrathful reactions to Hildigunnr's goading (*Nj*, pp. 291–92), his uncalled-for taunting and provocation of Ásgrímr, which is deemed 'óviturligt' (unwise) and 'mjǫk ofgǫrt' (very overdone) by Hallr from Síða (pp. 360, 362). Flosi is perhaps overly sensitive and hasty in his angry reactions to the silk garment that Njáll places on top of the settlement pile for Hǫskuldr's slaying (pp. 313–14).
[145] *Nj*, p. 238. 'Most vehement (or impetuous) of men.'
[146] *Nj*, p. 287. 'Caused him much worry (or anxiety) and anger, yet he remained even-tempered.'

actions.[147] Flosi retains his honour through the aftermath of the burning due to his honourable behaviour during the course of events.

The villain Mǫrðr Valgarðsson, a wealthy elite chieftain, is very restrained and calculated in his malicious actions. No explicit mention is made of his self-composure, but Mǫrðr is introduced twice as 'slœgr' (sly) and 'illgjarn' (malicious).[148] Indeed, he turns out to be the arch-villain of the saga because he lacks benevolence to go with his intelligence and restraint.[149] Mǫrðr is a complex elite trickster figure who shows his better side in the latter part of the saga and retains his honour in the end.[150] Despite his maliciousness and villainy, and in contrast with other villains, Mǫrðr follows the emotional practice of elite, honourable men who exercise strict restraint in their emotional display.

Saga heroes come with defects and often find themselves in dramatic situations where their moderation and emotional restraint are tested. The same applies to villains, who more often than not also come with positive streaks.

[147] *Nj*, pp. 342, 461.
[148] *Nj*, pp. 70, 119.
[149] On this point, see Vilhjálmur Árnason, 'An Ethos in Transformation', pp. 234–35.
[150] In the most extensive analysis yet of Mǫrðr as a character, Robert Cook attributes Mǫrðr's 'rehabilitation' to his own selfish, political agenda. See 'Mörðr Valgarðsson', pp. 73–76. See also Einar Ól. Sveinsson's discussion of four villains of *Njáls saga* (Hrappr, Þjóstólfr, Skammkell and Mǫrðr) in *Á Njálsbúð*, pp. 79–84. Ármann Jakobsson examines Mǫrðr's more sympathetic sides in 'Masculinity and Politics', pp. 212–13.

Conclusion

The fundamental question of this dissertation was how we, as modern readers, can understand the feelings depicted in literature written on the periphery of Europe over seven hundred years ago — that is, what might be hidden in the text that we, due to our unfamiliarity with the distant culture, might not fully grasp. In this study, I have analysed the emotional expression in *Egils saga* and *Njáls saga*, two particularly rich and complex thirteenth-century works that belong to a literary genre notorious for the apparent emotional reticence of its narrative style. Through my analysis, I have sought to question this assumption. I have argued that a productive approach to unravelling the narrative modes through which emotions are expressed is via the culture that produced them: its language, manuscript production, literary aesthetics, conceptions of the mind and body, systems of knowledge and beliefs, and values and ethics. Thus, in addition to producing an analysis of the literary depiction of saga feelings, I have sought to address and offer solutions to some of the methodological problems that arise when researching emotions in *Íslendingasǫgur*. Informed by cultural factors and the meaning systems behind them, my analysis has approached the matter from three angles, through language, body, and emotional practice, while focusing on interlaced signifiers for emotions and their function in the literary texts.

The first section demonstrated how an analysis of the emotional vocabulary can provide access to the narrative modes through which emotions are expressed. I analyse the words used to express feelings in the two sagas and present the first lexicons of emotion words from the two sagas. The results show that, contrary to what has been claimed, the emotional vocabulary in *Egils saga* and *Njáls saga* can be considered diverse

and varied. The words can be divided into ten different emotion categories, and the variety of nuances within each of them reveals the breadth of the sagas' emotive range. Both sagas contain terms for a broad spectrum of emotions, appearing in the text in a purposeful, precise way, serving a specific and meaningful narrative aim.

This can be seen from the fact that roughly 70% of the words appear only once or twice and are used for a specific occasion. Each of the two sagas has a rather different set of emotion words, where only thirty-six words are found in both sagas. They are applied in a customized and selective way to describe the emotions of the poet Egill differently from those of royal figures, different words are used for the feelings of Hallgerðr as opposed to Gunnarr, and yet another set of words is applied to the feelings of Njáll, and so forth. Each choice of words emphasizes the specific features of the characters and their function and place within the narrative, adding depth to their characterization and underlining and accentuating the ideas of femininity, masculinity, status, honour, and shame. While the vocabulary is varied, the articulation of emotions is blunt, and feelings are not dwelt upon through words with emotive content. Perhaps it is primarily in this sense that the former claims that the sagas are poor in emotional vocabulary and that the reader is seldom assisted by emotion words can be justified.

Emotive scenes certainly do contain emotion words, but they do not form a part of a string of such words when they appear, nor is emotive language used to elaborate on the emotions. Rather, the words typically appear only one or two at a time and are applied in a specific, concise way, where their connotations and placement in the text is loaded with meaning that should, as the results demonstrate, not be overlooked as inconsequential in the literary interpretation of the sagas. Furthermore, the emotive intensity of the words must be read in the context of bodily metaphors, gestures, and actions.

The learned Latin bodily conceptualization of emotions, based on the humoral doctrine, was embedded in the thought system and ideology of Latin Christendom and became synthesized in the Western Christian conception of human beings and their place in the world. This underlying physical understanding can be viewed as omnipresent, as it penetrated various sectors of culture in medieval Europe. *Íslendingasǫgur* were written at a time of intense cultural activity throughout Europe, which was becoming increasingly homogenized due to the expansion of Latin Christendom, and the church brought a flow of knowledge and texts to Iceland that were similar to or uniform with those elsewhere in Europe. This potentially influenced the

conceptualization of the body and emotions as depicted in the sagas written at the accumulation of these cultural currents.

As no study has specifically gathered the textual and manuscript evidence for Latin learned ideas of the body and emotions in thirteenth-century Iceland, I list this evidence in this dissertation to establish an outline of its manifestation within the intellectual culture of the social layer that produced the sagas. The evidence comes from law, hagiography, contemporary sagas, medical books, encyclopaedias, compilations or *florilegia,* and theological texts and stretches from the very earliest manuscripts in the Arnamagnæan collection dating from the late twelfth century. That these texts are of such various types and genres reflects the fact that the humoral schema of emotions was not confined to being a biological theory limited to scholarly discussions within natural philosophy or medicine but also formed a part of the wider medieval European reflection on man and his place in the world. Thus, various traces of the schema can be discerned in diverse cultural sectors. Based on how varied the Icelandic manuscript evidence is, it can reasonably be concluded that these ideas were known among the learned elite in thirteenth-century Iceland who composed the sagas in the form in which they are preserved. The extent to which these ideas were applied in the literary metaphors for emotion is a central interest in this dissertation. The main case studies, *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga*, were created at an intersection where various strands intertwine: the Latin learned and hagiographic, the continental chivalric, and the vernacular culture of poetry, myths, folklore, and the tradition of oral transmission. As a unique literary genre, but yet an artistic result of these various influences, it is reasonable to assume that the sagas represent a creative fusion of vernacular and Latin ideas.

It is possible to summarize the physiology of emotions as it appears in the sagas in the following manner, which elaborately includes all the core features of the humoral schema, conceptualized within an artistic framework and within a vernacular meaning system in an intricate web that reflects the intersection of Latin ideas and vernacular in an amalgamation. Emotions are portrayed as consisting in a force that has a fluid form within the body, which in turn functions like a pressurized container for the fluid. The fluid(s) bulge and flow through the body and move back and forth, manifesting in colour change (pallor, blushing, and blue-black colour), red patches, and swelling of the body. If the emotions are not controlled, soothed, or released through action, this can lead to grave physical consequences, such as fainting (Þórhallr) or the risk of death, as demonstrated in *Egils saga*. The body as the container of feelings is not 'sealed'; it can overflow or explode in the case of extreme, forceful emotions. The force of these

emotions presses outwards and threatens to burst the container and appears in the text as released in the form of blood, sweat, tears of hail, or pus. This is intermittently described through the artistic use of dramatic similes (such as *blóð* and *nár*) with mythological connotations (*hel*) or with reference to the kenning tradition (tears of hail). The same model appears in *Egils saga*, where mythological connotations can be argued to appear through Egill's metaphorical purging of melancholy through the 'vomiting' of his emotions in a poetic form. Furthermore, the imagery of melancholy from the Latin tradition is applied in the saga to mediate between two modalities of masculinity.

The hydraulic physiology of emotions described here includes the core features of the humoral model and broadly conforms to the conceptualization of emotions within the Latin knowledge system in the long twelfth century. However, the hydraulic schema as it appears in *Njáls saga* and *Egils saga* is conceptualized within an artistic framework in an intricate web reflecting the intersection of Latin and vernacular traditions. As this study is limited to two particular sagas, a comprehensive study across the Old Norse textual corpus may have the potential to provide a clearer picture of the interaction of Latin and vernacular threads constituting Old Norse psychologies as they manifest in the texts.

The kennings in the poetry attributed to Egill illustrate a perception of the breast as the joint container of poetic powers as well as emotions, and sentiments and poetry are portrayed as intimately connected. Kennings can provide insight into Old Norse poets' conceptualization of emotions, cognition, and the body via the artistic associations that poets have made in their creation. I examined kennings from the whole corpus of skaldic poetry for the head, breast, and heart to explore what conceptions of emotions appear. Moreover, I considered how these conceptions conform to the ideas represented in the verse and prose of *Egils saga* and *Njáls saga*. The results show that, within the tradition of kennings, emotions are depicted entirely as residing in the heart and breast, never in the head. This also holds true for cognitive abilities, aside from the suspect kenning *rýnnis reið*. This pectoral model of the mind holds true for poems that are attributed to both early and later skalds and regardless of whether or not the poem has a Christian theme, and the prose of both sagas is consistent with this conceptualization.

In the prose of *Njáls saga*, the outward physical manifestations of emotions are often portrayed as being against the character's will. The public discourse on appropriate emotional display exposes a distaste for extreme, bodily emotional reactions, which are depicted as a threat to a man's honour. The honourable man restrains a whole spectrum

of feelings, in particular, despair and fright, but also anger, grief, contempt, and joy. The words used to describe the temperament and emotional disposition of the most prominent heroes of the saga emphasize principally how self-possessed, even-tempered, and moderate they are. Distinct emotive scripts stipulate the appropriate articulation of their feelings. After the initial physical effect of these emotions has been suppressed, the noble expression of anger and grief is to take just action to restore one's reputation, through vengeance by blood if necessary. The suppression of the first impulse of these feelings is portrayed as essential to prevent hasty reactions because an unjust or unsuccessful retaliation would result in diminished honour. Christian emotive scripts can be identified through the depiction of characters who have turned to the new faith. These scripts allow for a more unrestrained display of grief through tears and intimate expressions in direct speech. Even though this type of emotional practice can be considered effeminizing, it is portrayed in the saga as a noble alternative and arguably reflects the intersection of pagan and Christian ideologies in relation to honourable emotional expression.

By applying the perspectives of 'emotional practice' and 'performativity', the social performative function of emotions within the sagas was probed. When the focus is placed on the corporeal and communicative aspects of emotional display, it becomes clearer how rituals, gestures, bodily tokens, and inscriptions on the body function as vehicles for the communication of emotions within the narrated world of the saga — and how this is interlaced with other cultural practices. Examples from *Egils saga* and *Njáls saga* were analysed where sentiments are broadcast through scripts of actions, utterances, and body language. The ritualistic and corporeal aspects reflect how emotional expressions are entwined with a range of cultural practices, of which the whetting ritual is a prominent example. This ritual operates as a context and a medium for the female expression of grief, anger, and humiliation, which is depicted in the narrative through the body as the primary narrative instrument.

The analysis and the results presented in this dissertation point to several productive areas for further research. One notable result is the difference between the two sagas in their emotional expression. The methods applied here could produce interesting results when applied to other sagas in the genre. For example, there are strong female characters in *Laxdœla saga* that defy the gendered models of honourable emotional practice reserved for only men in *Egils saga* and *Njáls saga*. The preliminary results on *Víglundar saga*, discussed in the first part of this thesis, indicate that expressions might be different in the post-classical sagas compared to the earlier ones,

perhaps due to the increased influence of other literary genres. Furthermore, the lexical analysis represent a basis for the formulation of a lexicon of emotional vocabulary across the Old Norse textual corpus and literary genres. Finally, an investigation of Old Norse psychologies, both pre- and post-Christian, could provide significant results. For example, strong indications exist of differences in bodily metaphors used in religious writings compared to those used in sagas and skaldic poetry, and between older and newer material. Such a study would aim to explore medieval Nordic perceptions and representations of the mind, body, and spirit through the close scrutiny of the rich vernacular poetry, prose, and learned and theological texts composed in the years *c.* 900–1400. This has the potential to enable the formulation of a synthesis of Old Norse psychologies and their historical and literary development in this period. In particular, it would be interesting to investigate pre-Christian notions about the mind, body, and spirit as reflected in Old Norse texts and the effects brought about by European Latin Christendom. This could provide a crucial but hitherto lacking component in the understanding of Old Norse intellectual culture and its interaction with other medieval cultures.

Abbreviations

AÍ = Kålund, Kristian and Natanael Beckman, eds., *Alfræði íslenzk. Islandsk encyklopædisk litteratur*, 3 vols (Copenhagen: Samfund til udgivelse af gammel nordisk litteratur, 1908–18)

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Eg = *Egils saga Skalla-Grímssonar*, ed. by Sigurður Nordal, Íslenzk fornrit, II (Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag, 1933)

Fóst = *Fóstbræðra saga*, ed. by Guðni Jónsson, in *Vestfirðinga sǫgur*, Íslenzk fornrit, VI (Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag, 1943), pp. 121–276

K = Ketilsbækur, AM 462 4to (Reykjavík) and AM 453 4to (Copenhagen)

M = Möðruvallabók, AM 132 fol. (Reykjavík)

Nj = *Brennu-Njáls saga*, ed. by Einar Ól. Sveinsson, Íslenzk fornrit, XII (Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag, 1954)

OED = *OED Online. Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, June 2017, <http://oed.com>

ONP = *Ordbog over det norrøne prosasprog: Registre, Index of medieval manuscripts*, Den Arnamagnæanske Kommission, June 2010, http://onp.ku.dk/

R = Reykjabók, AM 468 4to (Copenhagen)

Skj = Finnur Jónsson, ed., *Den norsk-islandske skjaldedigtning: B, rettet text*, 2 vols (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1912–15)

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